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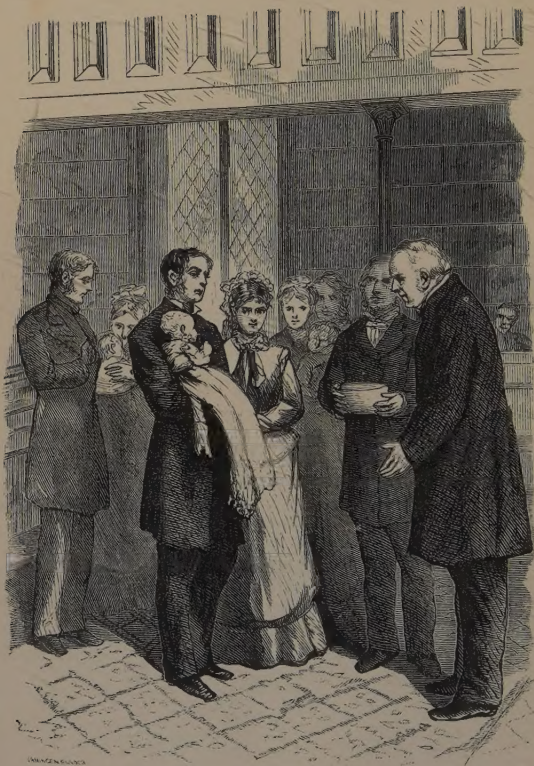
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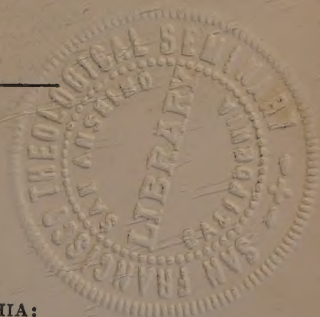
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GRACE WESTERVELT;

OR, THE

CHILDREN OF THE COVENANT.

A SEQUEL TO "THEODORE."



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## INTRODUCTION.

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A BAPTIST writer, in one of the pages of "Theodosia Ernest," utters a lament that no one even attempts to meet the assertions therein contained with "sober logic."

In pity for his woe, I attempted, in a book called "Theodore," which has been published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication, to reply to his statements as to the MODE of baptism. But that he might have no further cause of complaint it was necessary to treat also of INFANT BAPTISM, its Author, its benefits, and its office-work in the Church. This is the object of my present work, which, although complete in itself, is in some sort a continuation of "Theodore," inasmuch as it relates in part to the same characters.

In accordance with the plan pursued in "Theodore," the Baptist views presented are, for the most part, quotations from that remarkable fiction "Theodosia Ernest," its strongest points being given in its own words.

For the support and explanation of Presbyterian standards I have relied mainly upon articles to be found in different numbers of the "Presbyterian Quarterly Review." These are, to my own mind, both satisfactory and conclusive. May they prove as convincing to others as they have been to me, may the faith of many a Christian parent be quickened by them, and may many be encouraged to present their children for baptism who have hitherto denied to the little ones their rightful place in the Church and "their part in the Lord"!

THE AUTHOR.





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# GRACE WESTERVELT.

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## CHAPTER I.

*DR. GRAHAM VISITS THEODORE IN HIS NEW HOME.—IS INTRODUCED TO THE BABY.—INFANT BAPTISM.—TESTIMONY OF THE FATHERS UPON THIS SUBJECT.*



H, my friend, I am glad to see you!" said Theodore, advancing to meet Dr. Graham.

The young man's face spoke even a warmer welcome than his words, and there was that in the tone of his voice and the grasp of his hand which seemed to claim his friend's sympathy in some newly-awakened joy. A shade of emotion for a moment disturbed the good doctor's calm. Then he said,

"The news greeted me as soon as I reached

home, and I made haste to congratulate you. Your infant son is quite a prodigy, I hear, and the mother is doing well."

"Yes, Grace is very well," said Theodore, "as you shall see for yourself; for of course you will stay to tea and spend the evening with us. As to the boy, I am no judge of such matters, I have seen so few young children; but the doctor tells me that he really is a fine specimen, and that his head is quite wonderful for size and shape. However, you shall see him and judge for yourself. Come to the sitting-room and pay your respects both to mother and son. Grace will never forgive me if I do not take you to her at once."

The assumed indifference could not hide the conscious pride and the exultant happiness of the young father.

Dr. Graham smiled at the repressed excitement of manner and the added dignity which were so very evident. But the smile was quickly succeeded by a sigh as he remembered that even so pure a joy as this might hold in it the germ of future sorrow. A memory of the sons whom he had buried passed through his heart with so keen a pang that he could hardly regain his composure

ere he was ushered into the presence of the young wife and mother.

Grace sprang to her feet with a cry of joy as she caught sight of her husband's companion. Then she advanced to meet him and silently placed her hand in his. If Grace had been beautiful in the first bloom of her girlhood, she was even more so now, when her youthful charms were crowned and softened by the sweet grace of maternity.

"I need not ask if you have been well and happy during my long absence from the city, Mrs. Westervelt," said Dr. Graham, gently. "Your looks speak for you."

"We have needed but *this* to complete our happiness," said Grace. "Theodore has often longed to welcome you to our home, and of late we have both been eager to introduce you to our boy. Here he is, sir. *We* think he is a very fine baby."

As she turned in a little flutter of pride and expectation to bend over her sleeping child the doctor thought he never looked upon a more charming picture. The boy, flushed with sleep, reposing in his little hanging basket-cradle, all unconscious of the world upon which he had



entered; the mother looking down upon him with a tenderness which gave to her fair young face such a wonderful beauty; the father so erect, so strong, so noble, yet manifestly so proud of these his household treasures,—all these combined to form a picture upon which any eye might well linger with pleasure. Even the youthful parents were satisfied with the cordial admiration which their highly honored old friend awarded to the baby.

“You may well be proud of him,” said the doctor. “He really is a splendid boy. May God give you grace so to train him that he may do some great and useful work in the world!”

“Amen!” said Grace, softly, while Theodore added, “I have felt from the first that the gift of a child involves great responsibility.”

“If you have not yet presented him for baptism, I think I must claim the right to officiate at that service,” said Dr. Graham. “Having in some sort adopted you as my children, I should like to assist you in consecrating this little one publicly to the Lord.”

Theodore glanced at Grace, and her face flushed deeply, but both were silent.

“Am I, then, too late in making this request?”

said the doctor, looking from one to the other in some surprise at their evident confusion.

"No," said Theodore; "but to tell the truth, neither my wife nor I can find any warrant in the Bible for infant baptism, and we had about decided not to have our baby baptized at all."

"Ah," said the doctor, smiling, "I had forgotten that your early training had been such as to lead you to this conclusion. But you are willing to be convinced, are you not, if I can be so happy as to give you clear and satisfactory proof that infant baptism was ordained and blessed by God?"

"Oh, if you only could!" said Grace. "I must confess that this rite would be very precious to me if I could only believe in it. It often gives me pain to think that while we are safe within the Church of God and his covenant of grace, baby is shut out."

"There spoke the language of every Christian mother's heart," said Dr. Graham.

"But we must not forget that this is not a mere matter of feeling," said Theodore. "The question is, Have we the right to bring our children to God in baptism? I have been taught to believe that we have *not*, and that we can therefore hope for no blessing from God in doing so."

"And I have been taught to believe that we *have*, and that we therefore can and will be blessed in doing so," said Dr. Graham.

"Suppose we go over the ground with you," said Grace, smiling. "Would it be too much to ask of you, Dr. Graham, that you would aid us in giving the subject a more thorough investigation than we have yet done? But no; I feel sure of you. I remember your patience of old."

"I shall be glad to enlighten you as to my own views and my reasons for entertaining them," said the doctor. "But it may be a work of time to go over the *whole* ground."

"And what if it should be?" said Theodore, gayly. "How can time be better spent than in the investigation of truth? Besides, we would gladly cheat you into giving up some of your evenings to us by any plausible pretext. So, as soon as tea has been attended to, let us address ourselves to the work."

"Agreed," said the doctor, while Grace touched the bell and gave orders that the evening meal should at once be placed upon the table. An hour was devoted to social chat and a relation of Dr. Graham's varied experiences during his long absence; a few minutes more were given up to

exhibiting the baby's manifold perfections. Then Theodore led the way to the library.

"Here we shall be quiet and comfortable and free from interruption," he said.

Alas for all human expectations! Hardly had he pronounced the words ere the door opened and Mr. Courtney came bustling into the room.

"I knew I should find you here," he said, "and came to bestow my society upon you for an hour or two. It is really refreshing, after a hard day's work among a set of unruly boys, to come into a snug little home like this, where one may be sure of quiet and rest."

So saying, with that utter want of tact so characteristic of some people, he threw himself into the most comfortable chair in the room and rubbed his hands in the glow of the blazing fire, utterly oblivious of the manifest annoyance of both his host and hostess. A pause ensued. Grace was too much vexed to speak; Theodore hardly knew what course to pursue; while Dr. Graham, who guessed who the intruder might be, was regarding him with amusement and curiosity. Theodore was the first to recover himself.

"Mr. Courtney," he said, "allow me to introduce you to my old friend Dr. Graham, but lately

returned from Europe. You have often heard me speak of him."

Mr. Courtney sprang to his feet at the mention of that name and scanned the stranger, whom he had not noticed in his hurried entrance, with an air of distrust and displeasure.

"Ah! I am most happy, I am sure," he said, in gruff, harsh accents, and sank into his chair again with quite an altered aspect.

Now, Dr. Graham, with all his excellences, had in him a spirit of quiet mischief, which was fully aroused by the new comer's air and greeting. So he said, in his most courteous accents,

"How very opportune this meeting is, Mr. Courtney! We are just about to open an investigation of the subject of infant baptism. I wish these young people to have their child baptized, and am anxious to bring them over to my own view of the case. They demur, but profess to be open to conviction. I was just about to summon some higher authorities to my aid when you came in."

"Indeed!" said Mr. Courtney; "then I am glad I came. You had it all your own way with them on a former occasion. It shall not be so now, I promise you."

He turned and drew his chair up to the table, with the air of a man who was prepared to do battle with all the world. Dr. Graham placed himself opposite to him, calm, quiet and undisturbed, while Theodore and Grace waited to hear what would ensue, half vexed and half amused at this new aspect of affairs.

"I think I can prove to you, sir," began Mr. Courtney, "that you have no warrant for infant baptism either in the Scriptures or in the history of the Church."

"If you can, sir, I will own that I have greatly erred in all my thinking and in all my teaching upon this point," replied Dr. Graham.

"I do not see how any one can even put in a plea for such a custom," continued Mr. Courtney. "Infant baptism was not introduced in the time of the first Christians, nor until several hundred years after Christ."<sup>1</sup> How do you get rid of a fact like that?"

"Very easily, for I deny that it is a fact," said Dr. Graham.

"You deny it, sir!" exclaimed Mr. Courtney, with some excitement. "Why, I will prove to you, by the testimony of the ancient Fathers, and

<sup>1</sup>"Theodosia Ernest," p. 329.

by the testimony of your own most eminent historians and divines, that what I said is strictly and entirely true. I will show you that infant baptism was introduced in the same way, and by the same sort of authority, that *pouring* and *sprinkling* were.' ”<sup>1</sup>

“That last I grant you,” said Dr. Graham; “for I do believe that it was introduced by the same sort of authority. What that authority was I trust I have proved to the satisfaction of my young friends here, as well as to my own.”

“Let us keep to the point,” said Mr. Courtney. “You deny a fact which I have stated and can prove by quotations from your own writers. Coleman, one of your own writers, and a citizen of our own country, says: ‘Though the necessity of infant baptism was asserted in Africa and Egypt in the beginning of the third century, it was even to the end of the fourth by no means generally observed, least of all in the Eastern Church, and it finally became a general ecclesiastical institution in the age of Augustine,’<sup>2</sup> which was, you know, at the beginning of the fifth century.”

“I do not object to Coleman as an authority,”

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 338.



said Dr. Graham, rising and taking down "Coleman's Antiquities." "Here I read: 'Christian baptism has *from the beginning* been characterized for the universality of its application. Proselyte baptism was administered only to pagan nations. John's baptism was restricted solely to the Jews, but Christian baptism *is open alike to ALL*. Proselyte baptism included the children with their parents; John's baptism excluded both children and the female sex. *Christian baptism excludes no nation or sex or age.*'<sup>1</sup> It appears evident beyond a doubt that the ancient Church understood that Christian baptism was designed for all, in the fullest sense of the term. Of course it was understood to be universal in the highest degree. And although we find here the assertion in regard to the *Eastern Church* to which Mr. Courtney refers, it is but a *quotation* from Rheinwald, a German scholar, who previously says, 'Traces of infant baptism appear in the Western Church after the middle of the second century—*i. e.*, within about *fifty years* of the *apostolic age*; and toward the end of this century it becomes the subject of controversy in Proconsular Africa.' I also find just below this the statement that Siegal, another

<sup>1</sup>"Coleman's Antiquities," p. 259.

learned scholar, maintains that *infant baptism is of apostolical authority.*"

"Oh, Mr. Courtney," said Grace, "if that be so, I think it is hardly fair to refer to Coleman as one of your authorities when you assert that infant baptism was not introduced until several hundred years after Christ. Why, it seems to me that he says just the contrary."

"Such tampering with the evidence of a witness would hardly be allowed in law," said Theodore, dryly.

"Well, well, but I can give you other Pedobaptist authorities," said Mr. Courtney, in some confusion. "There are Dr. Mosheim and Neander, with many others that I could name."

"And to what purpose," said Dr. Graham, "since we all know 'that authority is not argument, nor is the ostentatious parade of names of any avail either to establish truth or to refute error? These authors themselves generally admit the validity of the testimony of the early Fathers.'<sup>1</sup> Let us therefore appeal directly to them."

"Well, sir, I am agreed," said Mr. Courtney, in a tone of triumphant assertion. "For there is *nothing at all* in the early Fathers in favor of infant

<sup>1</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 261.

baptism—not one word for the first two centuries, not even an allusion to it. It had not yet been invented. They had *never heard of it*, nor, so far as we can judge from their writings, had they so much as *thought of it*.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Graham smiled. “You take strong ground, sir,” he said. “I was hardly prepared for such a sweeping assertion as that, even from you.”

“I am prepared to maintain my position,” said Mr. Courtney. “If there be any record of infant baptism in the first ages of the Church, you can *show* it and I can see it. Your mere assertions are not worth a straw. Bring in your proof.”<sup>2</sup>

“Your request is very reasonable,” said Dr. Graham. “Let us first examine what Augustine has to say upon the subject. I find he uses this language, which is certainly very direct: ‘The custom of our mother the Church in baptizing infants must not be disregarded, nor be accounted needless, nor believed to be anything less than *an ordinance delivered to us from the apostles*.’”<sup>3</sup> And in connection with this let us hear Pelagius, the learned heretic, who had a controversy with Augustine upon the subject of original sin. He says :

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 344.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> “Miller on Infant Baptism,” p. 25.

‘Baptism ought to be administered to infants with the same sacramental words which are used in the case of adult persons.’ ‘Men slander me as if I denied the sacrament of baptism to infants.’ ‘*I never heard of any, not even the most impious heretic, who denied baptism to infants.*’”<sup>1</sup>

“Oh, this Augustine was a Catholic bishop who lived several hundred years after Christ,” said Mr. Courtney.

“He was born A. D. 354,”<sup>2</sup> said Dr. Graham, “at which time the general prevalence of infant baptism is conceded by all. And from his testimony it is very clear that your first statement is incorrect, namely, that there is *nothing at all* in the early Fathers in favor of infant baptism, for this Augustine was one of the most learned and venerable Fathers of the Christian Church, and he is a reliable witness. It is quite evident, both upon his word and that of Pelagius, that infant baptism was practiced in their day, and *had so long been* practiced that they had never heard of its having been denied or neglected. Now let us go a little further back, to Cyprian, who lived in the third century.”

<sup>1</sup> “Miller on Infant Baptism,” p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> “Coleman’s Antiquities,” p. 261.

“Oh,” said Mr. Courtney, hastily, “it is true that Cyprian received a letter from one Fidus, of whom nothing more is known than that he wrote such a letter, asking how soon after birth it might be proper to baptize. Cyprian, it seems, did not feel quite able to decide this momentous question, and called a council of sixty-seven of his brother bishops of North Africa.”<sup>1</sup>

“I should state this case more clearly and truly thus,” said Dr. Graham. “In the year 253 after Christ there was a council of sixty-six bishops or pastors held at Carthage, in which Cyprian presided.<sup>2</sup> To this council, Fidus, a country pastor, presented the following question, which he wished them, by their united wisdom, to solve—viz., Whether it was necessary, in the administration of baptism, as of circumcision, to wait until the eighth day, or whether a child might be baptized at an earlier period after its birth. The question, it will be observed, was not whether infants ought to be baptized—that was taken for granted—but simply whether it was necessary to wait until the eighth day after their birth. The council came *unanimously* to the following de-

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 351.

<sup>2</sup> “Miller on Infant Baptism,” p. 25.

cision, and transmitted it in a letter to the inquirer:

“ ‘Cyprian, and the rest of the bishops who were present in the council, sixty-six in number, to Fidus, our brother, greeting:

“ ‘As to the case of infants—whereas you judge that they must not be baptized within two or three days after they are born, and that the rule of circumcision is to be observed, that no one should be baptized and sanctified before the eighth day after he is born—we were all in the council of a very different opinion. As for what you thought proper to be done no one was of your mind, but we all rather judged that the mercy and grace of God is to be denied to no human being that is born. This, therefore, dear brother, was our opinion in the council—that we ought not to hinder any person from baptism and the grace of God, who is merciful and kind to us all. And this rule, as it holds for all, we think more especially to be observed in reference to infants, even to those newly-born.’ ”<sup>1</sup>

“ But neither the decree of Cyprian’s sixty-seven bishops nor the opinion of Gregory, the bishop of Constantinople, given more than one hundred

<sup>1</sup> Cyprian, “Epist.,” 66.

and twenty years after this, seems to have convinced the common people,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "For in the next generation—at the beginning of the fifth century—the priests and bishops who had espoused the new practice, which they doubtless found profitable to their own purses if not to the souls of the little water-made Christians, found it needful to meet in solemn council and pass another decree, declaring that 'infants ought to be baptized for the remission of sins, and that all who denied this doctrine should be accursed.'"

"Are you not rather presumptuous, sir," said Dr. Graham, "in speaking thus slightly of a custom which a large majority of Christians hold to be an ordinance of God, and of which you can have no direct proof to the contrary?"

"Besides, Mr. Courtney wanders from the main point of inquiry," said Theodore. "We are not now seeking to know what the after *effect* of this decision was, but *when* the custom of *infant baptism* was *first invented*, if it is indeed but an invention of man, as Mr. Courtney has confidently asserted. We find that it must have been prior to A. D. 253, for we have positive proof that it was then known and recognized by the Church."

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 352.



“Yes,” said Dr. Graham; “surely no testimony can be more unexceptionable and decisive than this. Lord Chancellor King says, in regard to it, ‘Here is a synodical decree for the baptism of infants, as formal as can possibly be expected, which, being the judgment of a synod, is more authentic and cogent than that of a private Father, it being supposable that a private Father might write his own particular judgment and opinion only, but the determination of a synod denotes the common practice and usage of the whole church.’”<sup>1</sup>

“After all,” said Mr. Courtney, “all this goes for nothing, so far as my statement is concerned that infant baptism was not even thought of or heard of in the Church for more than *two hundred* years after Christ. This meeting of bishops was held A. D. 253.”

“Let us go a step further back, then,” said Dr. Graham, “and consult Origen, who was born in Egypt, of Christian parents, A. D. 185.<sup>2</sup> I consider him a very valuable and reliable witness, because he lived within a century of the apostolic age and received this tradition from his own pious

<sup>1</sup> “Miller on Infant Baptism,” p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> “Coleman’s Antiquities,” p. 263.

ancestry, who, of the second or third generation from him, must have been contemporary with the apostles themselves. I have in my pocket a book which contains a table which shows the contemporaries with his family from indisputable authority.

CONTEMPORARIES AND DESCENT OF THE  
ORIGEN FAMILY.

JOHN, *Apostle, living.* PAUL, A. D. 67, dec'd. MARK,  
*Evangelist, A. D. 68.*

A. D.      Origen's great-grandfather, living, A. D. 80,  
when Mark had been dead but 12 years.

96. *Polycarp, disciple  
of John, living.*

97. *Irenæus, born.*      TIMOTHY, A. D. 97.

101. *Fohn dies.*

116. *Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna*, REV. ii. 8. *Origen's grandfather*, A. D. 120.  
*"Faithful men,"* A. D. 140. *Origen's father*, A. D. 160.  
 2 Tim. ii. 2.

170. Irenæus,  
bishop of Lyons,  
disciple of Polycarp,  
mentions *reborn*  
infants.

"Others also," A. D. 180.

2 Tim. ii. 2.      Origen born, A. D. 185.

Origen's father  
martyred, A. D. 202.

"There can be no doubt that many apostolic persons were living in Egypt who had daily intercourse with Judea; that many of the Jewish Christians, after the destruction of Jerusalem, settled among their countrymen at Alexandria; and that from these, as well as from other Christians in Greek churches, Origen obtained correct information respecting all Christian rites, occasional or constant."

"This is indeed a reliable witness," said Theodore. "In a court of law I should say he had every claim to be heard. What does he say about infant baptism?"

"Origen's words are these," said Dr. Graham: "'*The Church received from the apostles the injunction or tradition to GIVE BAPTISM even TO INFANTS, according to that saying of our Lord concerning infants, And thou wast an infant when thou wast baptized: their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.*'<sup>1</sup> And in another place he says, 'Infants also, by usage of the church, are baptized.'<sup>2</sup> Now, what is it short of impossible<sup>3</sup> to imagine that Origen

<sup>1</sup> "Taylor's Apostolic Baptism," p. 23.

<sup>2</sup> "Hom. viii. on Levit., chap. xii."

<sup>3</sup> "Taylor's Apostolic Baptism," p. 26.

had been imposed upon—he who had traveled for the express purpose of acquiring information, who visited the apostolic churches, resided among the chief of them—that he should not know the Christian observances in his own family from his father, his grandfather, etc., derived from Mark, the Evangelist?”

“It is hardly a supposable case,” said Theodore.

“We come next to Tertullian,” said Dr. Graham. “He flourished some years before Origen, and within less *than one hundred* years of the apostolic age.<sup>1</sup> He objects strongly to the *hasty administration* of baptism to children, and inveighs against the superstition of the age in this respect in such a manner as to show beyond dispute the prevalence of the custom in his days.”

“Not so,” said Mr. Courtney, hastily. “It seems that a certain wealthy lady named Quintilla, who was probably a mother and felt this very natural anxiety about her little ones, had come to the conclusion that if they asked for baptism they ought to have it, whether they gave evidence of conversion or not; and she wrote a letter to Tertullian, the bishop of the church at

<sup>1</sup> “Coleman’s Antiquities,” p. 264.

Carthage, to get his sanction to this novel doctrine. The answer of Tertullian to this letter has been preserved, and contains the first undoubted allusion to the baptism of children which is recorded in the annals of church history. Now, if infant baptism had been a universal custom, as is pretended by some, there never could have been any occasion for Quintilla to write to Tertullian on the subject, for children would have been baptized as a matter of course, whether they asked for it or not.”<sup>1</sup>

“Yet this same Tertullian,” said Dr. Graham, “‘expressly recommends that infants be baptized if they are not likely to survive the period of infancy.’”<sup>2</sup> He would hardly have done that if the idea had been a *new* one, especially as he wrote against infant baptism as generally practiced in the church. Indeed, it is worthy of notice that ‘Tertullian does not intimate that his own church is peculiar in the observance of this rite, or that there was any example in favor of the correction for which he pleads. Neither does he refer to the authority of Scripture nor to the usage of the Church in opposition to the baptism of infant

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 347.

<sup>2</sup> “Miller on Infant Baptism,” p. 22.

children. Is it possible that this father of tradition could have overlooked so important a point had there been any authority, usage or tradition in favor of his own peculiar views?'<sup>1</sup>

"Hardly possible, I think," said Theodore.

"Next let us refer to Irenæus, 'born A. D. 97,'"<sup>2</sup> said Dr. Graham. "'He was intimately associated with Polycarp, the disciple of John, and says of him, '*I remember his discourse to his people concerning the conversations he had had with John the apostle and others who had seen our Lord; how he rehearsed their discourses, and what he heard them who were eye-witnesses of the word of Life say of our Lord and of his miracles and doctrine.*'"

"I do not doubt that you quote Irenæus as an authority for infant baptism,"<sup>3</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "You doctors of divinity, who consider baptism and regeneration as all the same thing, have discovered in his writings the following sentence: 'Christ passed through all the ages of man that he might save all by himself; all, I say, who are by him *regenerated* to God—infants, and little ones,

<sup>1</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 264.

<sup>2</sup> "Taylor's Apostolic Baptism," p. 25.

<sup>3</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 345.

and children, and youths, and persons advanced in years.' Now, this is the *only* allusion which it is pretended that Irenæus makes to infant baptism, and some have had the temerity, not to say the dishonesty—since they themselves consider baptism and regeneration as the same thing, and because Irenæus, in some other place, uses regenerate in the sense of baptize—to strike out *regenerated* here and put in *baptized*, and then refer to Irenæus as having recognized infant baptism. I am sure the cause must be a very weak one which requires such support, and they must be very weak advocates of any cause who could stoop to employ such arguments in its favor."

"Do you think so?" said Dr. Graham. "Now I differ from you entirely, being weak enough 'to find in this passage valid and incontrovertible proof of the practice of infant baptism at this early age, in which opinion I am supported by Neander, Rheinwald, and many others who have taken pains to investigate this subject.'<sup>1</sup> Nor do I think I lay myself open to the charge of temerity or dishonesty in stating this opinion, since it has been deliberately formed upon all the evidence I have at command. Although *I* do not consider

<sup>1</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 265.

*baptism* and *regeneration* as the same thing, as you would imply, I find that, 'according to the general usage of that age, baptism WAS regeneration, and that the form of expression used (*renascuntur in Deum*), regenerated unto God, was familiar to Irenæus, and to the Fathers generally, as denoting baptism.'<sup>1</sup> When I find, therefore, that after the statement, 'Christ came to save all persons through himself,' there is this qualifying clause, 'all, I say, who through him are regenerated unto God—infants, and little ones, and children, and youth, and the aged'—I naturally am led to ask, What does it mean? How were these infants specially regenerated unto God? And when I find Irenæus himself, in referring to our Lord's commission to his disciples, saying, 'When he gave his disciples this commission of *regenerating unto God*, he said unto them, Go and teach all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost,' it seems quite clear to me, whatever my own opinion may be as to the appropriateness of such a use of the term *regenerated unto God*, that Irenæus in this passage refers to *infant baptism*. Indeed, for my part I am astonished that any intelligent person can examine the

<sup>1</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 265.



case in all its bearings and come to a different conclusion."

"I also am weak enough to confess that I share your error, Dr. Graham, if error it be," said Grace, laughing.

"And this brings us very near to the time of Christ," said Theodore, thoughtfully.

"Within the space of one century," said Dr. Graham. "Then the authority of Justin Martyr is relied on by many."

"Justin Martyr!" exclaimed Mr. Courtney. "Yes, I know it is claimed by some that Justin Martyr recognizes the baptism of infants when he says to some aged Christians that they had been followers of Christ from their childhood, or, as these men read, from their *infancy*. But it is well known that in those days all *minors*—that is, all under twenty-five years of age, for that was considered the limit of manhood—were often called children, and even infants. And we read of some instances of persons becoming bishops while they were 'infants'—that is, before they came of age—and of many persons being led to martyrdom while they were infants, and making earnest profession of the faith which they felt in their hearts and sealed with their blood. The Baptists

will baptize as many such infants as desire to enter into the Church of Jesus Christ. But you will not accuse us, on that account, of practicing the baptism of unconscious babes, and these mentioned by Justin Martyr are not said to have been *baptized* in infancy, but to have followed Christ from their infancy.”<sup>1</sup>

Theodore here interrupted the discussion by a merry laugh, which brought the eyes of both Dr. Graham and Mr. Courtney to bear upon him in mingled astonishment and reproof.

“Excuse me!” he said, struggling to regain a grave and sober countenance; “but this singular mode of reasoning reminded me so forcibly of a story which I heard in my childhood that I quite forgot myself. It was the story of an old woman who had borrowed a kettle from her nearest neighbor and had had the misfortune to break it. On being reproved for her carelessness, she hastened to justify herself in this wise: ‘I never broke your kettle—it was broken when I borrowed it; besides, I remember that it was whole when I sent it home; besides, I *could not* have done it, for I *never had your kettle.*’ It seems to me that your reasoning just now, Mr. Courtney, was somewhat

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 346.

in this fashion. You first deny the correctness of the use of the word *infancy*, implying that it has been wrongfully substituted, in the passage quoted, for *childhood*, thus tacitly admitting that the word would read somewhat against your cause if admitted. You then try to prove that *infant* here means *minor*, or any person under twenty-five years of age, from which I infer that you have a shrewd suspicion that Justin Martyr *did* speak of *infants*. You then throw doubt on the question of the *baptism altogether*, leaving your opponents not a peg to hang an argument upon."

Dr. Graham suppressed an inclination to smile as he saw the tokens of rising anger in the face of Mr. Courtney.

"Let us not give way to levity in so serious a discussion," he said. "The passage I would quote from Justin Martyr reads thus: 'There are many persons of both sexes, some sixty, some seventy and some eighty years old, who were *made disciples* to Christ in their childhood.'<sup>1</sup> He also says, '*Infants* are washed with water in the name of the Father and Son and Spirit.'<sup>2</sup> He also says in so many words 'that in the earliest

<sup>1</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> "Peters on Baptism."

days of the Christian Church *baptism was practiced in the place of circumcision.*'<sup>1</sup> Now, as we all know that circumcision was administered to unconscious babes, we would naturally conclude, when Justin Martyr plainly asserts that baptism was practiced in the place of circumcision, that when he speaks of persons who were *made* disciples in *childhood*, and of *infants* who were washed, etc., *he* refers to 'unconscious babes' also."

"It would seem difficult to believe otherwise," said Grace, thoughtfully, "taking these different expressions in connection."

"And if we receive this as evidence in our favor," said Dr. Graham, "it brings us still nearer to the time when the Christian Church was first established. 'For Justin Martyr lived in the first half century after the death of the apostle John,'<sup>2</sup> and these aged persons, who were made disciples to Christ in their childhood, *were baptized in the age of the apostles.*"<sup>3</sup>

"Well, sir, and what then?" said Mr. Courtney, hastily. "The simple fact that we find any practice or doctrine in the churches at an early day is

<sup>1</sup> "Baker on Baptism," p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> "Peters on Baptism," p. 169.

<sup>3</sup> "Coleman's Antiquities," p. 267.

no evidence at all that it was received either from Christ or his apostles.’<sup>1</sup> The Scriptures are our only guide. This you as Protestants admit, and by this you are precluded from all recourse to the *traditions* of the first Christians in regard to infant baptism, or anything else concerning the doctrines and ordinances of our religion. So that it is nothing to you or to me, if infant baptism had existed in these early days.”

“Yet it is everything in regard to the historical argument upon this subject,” said Dr. Graham; “and I think our investigation has quite disproved your assertion that there is not *one word, nor even allusion to it, for the first two centuries.*”

“Yes, Mr. Courtney, I think you will be obliged to retract that assertion,” said Theodore.

“I do not retract at all,” said Mr. Courtney.

“Be it so,” said Dr. Graham, smiling. “There are none so blind as those who will not see. We have found that within the space of one century from the time of the apostles infant baptism is in general practice as an authorized usage of the Christian Church. ‘When was it introduced if not by the apostles?’<sup>2</sup> And by whose authority

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 350.

<sup>2</sup> “Coleman’s Antiquities,” p. 265.

if not by theirs? To these important inquiries all history is silent, assigning no time for its first introduction, nor revealing the least excitement, controversy or opposition to an innovation so remarkable as this must have been if it was obtruded upon the churches without the authority of the apostles. How, especially, could this have been effected in that age, which adhered so strictly, even in the smallest things, to ancient usage, and which was so near to the apostles that their usages and instructions must have been known by tradition?' I leave these points for your consideration, for it is too late for further discussion to-night."

"*Must* you go, Dr. Graham?" said Grace, pleadingly. I am not in the least tired. "I have been so much interested that I cannot bear to wait till another evening to look for the *Scripture* testimony. That is, as Mr. Courtney says, the main thing, after all."

Dr. Graham drew out his watch and silently held it before her.

"Eleven o'clock!" she exclaimed. "I had no idea that it was so late."

"And when shall we meet again?" said Theodore.

"To-morrow evening, if you wish it," said Dr. Graham.

"I trust you will allow me to be present," said Mr. Courtney. "These young people are rather ignorant in regard to this subject, and could be easily imposed upon."

"Then, as I have no desire either to impose upon ignorance or to pervert the truth, I will gladly hear what you have to offer in opposition to my views," said Dr. Graham, courteously, as he took his leave.

When Theodore had shown the gentlemen to the door, he came back to find Grace with the baby in her arms, looking down upon him with a smile that expressed a world of tender feeling.

"Oh, my baby, my baby!" she murmured. "If I only might know that he could be brought within the fold—that the Saviour would own and bless us in presenting him publicly to him, as a child of the covenant!"

"It would be a precious privilege," said Theodore, "and I cannot but hope that it may be ours. I am quite satisfied with the historical evidence which Dr. Graham brought forward in support of his views; and if he is as clear in his Scripture

argument, our little one shall be baptized without delay."

"It will be delightful to give him up to God in so solemn a service, if we may, if it is right," said Grace; and a tear fell upon the tiny hand that lay clasped within her own.







## CHAPTER II.

*SECOND EVENING, IN WHICH THE DISCUSSION CHIEFLY RELATES TO THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.*



THINK we now come to the most important branch of our investigation," said Dr. Graham as he seated himself in the cosy library on the following evening: "What warrant do we find in the Scriptures for infant baptism?"

"Yes, that is the all-important question,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "Our authority to baptize any one, infant or adult, is derived only from the commandments or example of Christ or his apostles. All they said and all they did which is of any authority to us is recorded in the word of God. Now, if I can't find, and you can't show me, any single place where an infant was commanded to be baptized, or any single place where one is said

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 203.

to have been baptized, then I think I may venture to say that *there is no authority there for infant baptism.*"

"Hold!" said Dr. Graham. "You may, of course, *say* it, but you do not *prove* it. 'If we admit that in everything relating to positive institutes we must have direct and positive precepts, the assumed principle will prove too much.'<sup>1</sup> 'Admitting, as we must, that all positive religious rites are *originally* founded on an express divine command, we cannot safely conclude that such a command will be repeated to all those who shall afterward be under obligation to observe those rites, or even that the original command will be preserved and communicated to them in the sacred writings.'<sup>2</sup> For example, what clear and certain proof have we that the divine command enjoining the observance of the Sabbath or the offering of sacrifices was repeated to the successive generations of men from Adam to Moses, or that they had evidence of either of those divine institutions from historical records? And what certain proof is there of the repetition of the divine command or the existence of historical records,

<sup>1</sup> "Miller on Infant Baptism," p. 36.

<sup>2</sup> "Woods on Infant Baptism," pp. 17, 18, 19.

during the period from Abraham to Moses, respecting the rite of circumcision? What express command has God given to us, or to any Christians since the days of the apostles, requiring the first day of the week to be observed as a Sabbath? And what shall we say in regard to *female communion*?

“Why, having no *express* command to plead, we bring forward other considerations which show us the will of God. We rest the Christian Sabbath on the ground of the *original institution* of the Sabbath, as enjoined in the fourth command of the Decalogue, admitting that the original institution was particularly modified at the commencement of the Christian dispensation, although our sacred writings nowhere *expressly require* such a modification. We admit females to the communion, not by any express *command* of Christ, not by any *definite account* in the Scriptures that they actually did partake, but because we believe it to be the will of God. The argument on which we rest in this case is derived from the reasonableness of the thing, from the uniform practice of the early Christian churches as set forth in ecclesiastical history, and from what appears to be *implied* in the Scripture account. Now, if this be

so, why should we apply a requirement to infant baptism which we do not insist upon in other observances of the Church that are equally important?"

"Because those only are fit subjects for baptism whom *Christ has commanded to be baptized*,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "The gospel has nothing to do with infants."

"Indeed!" said Dr. Graham. "That is a sad doctrine for a parent to receive. If this good news, this revelation and dispensation which God has made known to guilty man through Jesus Christ our Saviour, has *nothing to do with infants*, we may as well give up our interest in this matter now and for ever. But I thank my God it is not so, for the promise is to us and to our children."

"Oh, I do not mean that," said Mr. Courtney. "I only mean that there is no command addressed to them—there is no act either of mind or body, required of them in order to their salvation.<sup>2</sup> They are no more required to believe than they are to be baptized. They are saved without either."

"On what ground?" said Dr. Graham. "Do

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

you hold them to be regenerate or sinless by nature, and as such entitled to God's mercy?"

"No, for they are by nature the children of wrath even as others," replied Mr. Courtney, "and as soon as they are old enough they show it very plainly."

"Then, if you derive your knowledge of their salvation from other sources, you must give these *infants*, with whom the gospel has nothing to do, a place in the *covenant of grace*," said Dr. Graham. "Yet you would deny to them its appointed sign and seal! Strange contradiction!"

"You say that the Scriptures authorize infant baptism, do you not, Dr. Graham?" said Grace. "How can that be so if there is nothing said about it in all the Bible, as I have heard it stated by my Baptist friends ever since I can remember?"

"I do," said Dr. Graham, decidedly; "and I find my warrant for this assertion, first, in the fact that '*in all Jehovah's covenants with his professing people, from the earliest ages and in all states of society, their infant seed have been included.*'<sup>1</sup> In the second place, I find it in the fact that in confirmation of that most gracious and spiritual

<sup>1</sup> "Miller on Infant Baptism," p. 7.

promise which God made to Abraham, 'I will be a God to thee *and to thy seed*;' there was an *appointed religious rite*, and that this rite of circumcision, which was '*a seal of the righteousness of faith*,' was appointed by God for infants as well as for those of mature years. In the third place, I find it in the fact 'that the Church under the Abrahamic covenant and under the New Testament dispensation is substantially one and the same institution,'<sup>1</sup> and it is nowhere mentioned that any change was made *repealing this law* that infants were to be brought within the pale of the visible Church. In the fourth place, I find it in the fact that, as *circumcision* was the *sign and seal* of membership under the Old Testament dispensation, *baptism* is the *sign and seal* of membership under the New Testament dispensation, and since the *seal* was affixed to *unconscious babes* in the one *by divine command*, and since there is no withdrawal of that *command as to these* in the other, I deny the right of any human authority to forbid the consecration of infants to God in baptism. In the fifth place, I find much in the words of Christ to encourage such a practice had it existed, while there is not one word to rebuke it.

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 530.

In the sixth place, I find it in the fact that eight cases of *household baptism* are specially mentioned in the New Testament, which evidently authorizes the baptism of *families collectively*, and is, taken in connection with the other facts which I have stated, as valid an argument for the practice of infant baptism as one could have without particular mention of them as a class. These considerations, and many others which I have not stated, lead me to this conclusion. It is not only in accordance with God's plan that we should consecrate our children to him in baptism, but he *requires* it of us. And we cannot neglect this duty without great loss of spiritual blessings both to them and to ourselves."

"Your argument amounts to this,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney: "The Jews circumcised their male infants at eight days old because God had again and again positively commanded them to do so; therefore Christians should baptize all their infant children, both male and female, because the Lord has given no commandment on the subject. Such logic may be very conclusive to you, but I can never be convinced by it."

"Not so," said Dr. Graham, smiling. "I should

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 294.

prefer to state it in this way: If God has said, 'This is my covenant, that ye apply the token thereof to your child,' as he did (Genesis xvii. 10, 11), if the Abrahamic covenant is in force in our day, and if the Abrahamic covenant *commands* the parent to apply the sign and seal of the covenant to the person of his child, why is not every Christian bound to present his child for baptism?"

"That is a question easily answered," said Mr. Courtney. "Christ plainly commands *believers* to be baptized, and he commands no others. Neither is it true that Christianity is the same substantially as Judaism. It was one of the most earnest labors of Paul to explain and enforce the difference. This difference was substantial, it was fundamental, it was constitutional. The other was a religion of works; this is one of faith."<sup>1</sup>

"Do you really think so?" said Dr. Graham. "Then you assert that all those who composed the church in the Old Testament dispensation were saved through works alone. Truly, if that is your doctrine, you are wise above that which is written, for Paul expressly says, 'By *faith* Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain.'<sup>2</sup> 'By *faith* Enoch was translated that he

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 301.

<sup>2</sup> Heb. xi.



should not see death; for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. But without faith it is *impossible* to please him.' And so on through the whole chapter, where instances enough are given to prove that the great requirement from man is faith. He also assures us that this faith pointed to Christ, and explains it thus: 'Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.'<sup>1</sup> Then we are not only told in the language of the covenant made with Abraham that it is an *everlasting* covenant, 'but in the eighth chapter of Hebrews Paul alludes to the Sinai covenant as an inferior, abrogated one, and in contrast brings up that better, more enduring covenant which was established upon better promises. He gives us a sample of these better promises. One is, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Another is, "I will put my laws within their minds and write them in their

<sup>1</sup> Gal. iii. 16, 17.

hearts." Here are the three marks of the covenant of Abraham. It is an everlasting covenant, securing to Israel Jehovah as their God, and putting his fear in their hearts.'"<sup>1</sup>

"Oh yes, I know all that you would say," exclaimed Mr. Courtney, with some impatience. "God agreed with Abraham that he would give his seed the land of Canaan for a possession for ever, and as a condition, on the other part, he required that every man-child should be circumcised. I can understand all that; but what has it to do with baptism or Christianity? No more than the carrying of the bones of Joseph out of Egypt."<sup>2</sup>

"Why, my dear sir," said Dr. Graham, "is that all the meaning that you attach to this rite of circumcision?"

"Certainly," said Mr. Courtney; "the truth is simply this:<sup>3</sup> God made a covenant with Abraham when he was ninety-nine years old, in which he promised to his seed the land of Canaan. The token or memento of this contract was the circumcision of every male. This was the condition of their entering Canaan. This is its object, and this is the sum of its value."

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 522.

<sup>2</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 298.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305.

"Indeed?" said Dr. Graham. "If it was so understood, I am at a loss to comprehend some passages in the history of the Jews. What right to such succession did circumcision confer on Ishmael? What right to inheritance in the land of Judea did circumcision confer on the <sup>Sichonites</sup> Gileadites,<sup>1</sup> on Achor,<sup>2</sup> and on the Persians who became Jews under the patronage of Mordecai?"<sup>3</sup>

"But what has all this to do with baptism?" said Mr. Courtney.

"Much," said Dr. Graham, "for substantially the sign and seal of the Abrahamic covenant is the sign and seal of the gospel covenant.<sup>4</sup> This is true in a general sense. Each in its general nature is an outward sign of an inward grace. 'Baptism is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.'<sup>5</sup> 'Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter.'<sup>6</sup> Each too, in its general office, is the covenant of a purity required of man,<sup>7</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Josh. ix. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Judith xiv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Esth. viii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> "Pres. Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 542.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Rom. ii. 29.

<sup>7</sup> Gen. xvii. 11.

promised by God.<sup>1</sup> But the similitude between baptism and circumcision is not confined to their general features; it is exact in every important particular. Four things define Christian baptism: 1. By its nature baptism expresses purification from defilement. So does circumcision.<sup>2</sup> 2. By scriptural appointment baptism stands for faith, a righteousness. So does circumcision.<sup>3</sup> 3. By baptism the subject speaks out his repentance and faith, covenanting with God, and God pledges purification and pardon, covenanting with the subject. Precisely this is the operation in circumcision.<sup>4</sup> 4. In the very use of baptism the subject literally enters into God's family and is received by him. Exactly so was it with him who was circumcised of old.<sup>5</sup> The covenant of the Church in our day carries a sign and seal appointed of God and embodying the substance of the covenant, both on God's part and on man's. The covenant of the Church in Abraham's day employed a sign and a seal equally appointed of God and descriptive of the respective pledges of the parties. It follows that the Abrahamic covenant and the gospel economy are one and the

<sup>1</sup> Deut. xxx. 6.<sup>2</sup> Jer. iv. 4.<sup>3</sup> Rom. iv. 17.<sup>4</sup> Gen. xvii. 11.<sup>5</sup> Phil. iii. 13.

same institution. And if this be true, CHRISTIAN PARENTS ARE BOUND TO PRESENT THEIR CHILDREN FOR BAPTISM."

"In other words, you would say that baptism came in the room of circumcision," said Mr. Courtney. "But it is not enough for me to know that *you* teach it.<sup>1</sup> I want a plain scriptural statement of the facts. Show me where the word says so. Show me anything like it."

"If it does not, I can show you a marvel," said Dr. Graham. "'Baptism utters every word and works every end of circumcision perfectly. Circumcision, as to its nature, is heavenly language of spiritual things through a sensible sign; so is baptism precisely. Circumcision in its natural import declares, 'I am defiled and must be cleansed,' on man's part; 'You are defiled and I will cleanse you,' on God's part.'<sup>2</sup> This is the natural language of baptism precisely. Circumcision was set up to signify faith on man's part, and its imputation to him for righteousness upon God's part. So, too, baptism was instituted to express faith on man's part and remission of sin on God's part precisely. In circumcision man says, 'I covenant

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 297.

<sup>2</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 549.

with thee, O God, repenting of my sin, and looking through faith to offered righteousness,' and God responds, 'I covenant with thee, my believing child, and will wash your impurity and accept your righteousness.' So does baptism speak out the very same voices of the parties precisely. Finally, circumcision carried the party into the visible family of God, and brought the arms of the Father round his adopted child. Here, too, baptism accomplishes the very work of circumcision precisely.

"Circumcision touched three things only, God, man and the covenant between them. Baptism touches three things only, God, man and the covenant between them. Every bearing of circumcision upon God, man and the covenant, baptism carries out toward God, man and the covenant, with precisely the same spirit, thought and intent. In a word, by God's appointment circumcision expresses and executes the great covenant of grace between God and man in ancient times. So, by God's appointment, baptism expresses and executes the great covenant of grace between God and man in modern times. What, then, can that man mean who says that baptism does not come in the place of circumcision? And

what can Paul mean when he makes baptism follow circumcision in the same sentence, and pronounces baptism the circumcision of our dispensation? 'In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism.'"<sup>1</sup>

"There is a plain scriptural statement, I am sure, Mr. Courtney," said Theodore, who had listened to this summary with great interest. "What can you ask for more?"

"The argument may be summed up in a word,"<sup>2</sup> continued Dr. Graham. "The Scriptures assure us that the Abrahamic covenant is of force in our day. The Scriptures assure us that one element of the covenant is this—its deliberate and solemn consummation by the parties respectively in and through their own personal act of signing and sealing the covenant. Now, since no voice of reason or Scripture indicates its repeal in the gospel dispensation, like every other part of this standing covenant, the sign and seal of the covenant stands also, and is of obligation in our day.

<sup>1</sup> Col. ii. 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855.

But the *covenant itself distinctly requires* that its *appointed sign and seal* should be applied to the *CHILD of the believer*. WHY, THEN, DOES NOT EVERY BELIEVER PRESENT HIS CHILD FOR BAPTISM? Should he not do so?"

"Jesus Christ himself shall answer,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney: "'If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. So, likewise, whoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.' Do little infants, who do not even know the name of Christ, and scarcely know their own, so love Christ that the love they have to all others is like hatred compared to what they feel for him? Can little infants forsake all for Christ, and do they daily take their cross and follow him? Then they are his disciples, and are commanded to be baptized. But no sensible man, who is not a doctor of divinity, would ever think of such an absurdity. You do not pretend to baptize infants on any such grounds. You do not ask in them for any evidence of penitence or

<sup>1</sup>"Theodosia Ernest," p. 206.



piety or faith or love, or anything else that goes to make a disciple of Christ."

"No," said Dr. Graham, "nor when I read, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned,' do I say, This infant cannot believe, he cannot give any evidence of faith, *therefore he shall be damned*. I should rather say, This infant, if he should be called to die before he is capable of exercising this faith in Christ, will be saved through the covenant of grace, which makes it all the more fitting that he should receive the *sign and seal* of the covenant—namely, *baptism*."

"Still, you cannot evade this point, with all your ingenuity, Dr. Graham," said Mr. Courtney: "we are not told in direct language to baptize infants."

"I do not seek to evade it," said Dr. Graham.<sup>1</sup> "'If the gospel is indeed a *new* religion, we have a right to require that infant baptism shall stand out clearly revealed on its pages, but we are to remember that *foundations* lie in the Old Testament, *republication, explication*, in the New.'<sup>1</sup> How unreasonable it is, then, to interpret New Testament statements concerning the framework of the

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 564.

Church as though nothing had been settled upon the subject before ! Jesus and the apostles frequently referred to the Old Testament as the grand depository of all instruction and authority upon questions of New Testament doctrine."

"If we find a command for infant membership in the Church, and if it is never formally repealed, it seems to me a very strong argument in its favor," said Theodore, thoughtfully.

"So strong as to be conclusive," said Dr. Graham. "For the spirit and bearing of the new dispensation is still more unfriendly than the old to the exclusion of the children of the Church from the seal of the covenant.<sup>1</sup> Under the ancient administration gracious things were faintly shadowed through types and prophecies ; under the new the great Antitype himself is come, and a clear light shines forth on every hand. Under the old, worship was largely limited to one spot on earth, the covenant was preached to one nation under heaven,<sup>1</sup> the badge of salvation was affixed to one sex of the race. But under the liberalities of our most glorious day every blessing is enlarged without limitation. The gospel is preached to every creature under heaven, Gentile as well as

<sup>1</sup>"Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 554.

Jew, and the baptismal badge of salvation is extended to the whole race.

“Now, when every other great and noble blessing circumscribed and tied up under the first economy breaks out into boundless development in our day, is it not an outrage upon the broad and liberal spirit of the gospel to suppose that this very year of jubilee, which strikes to the earth all checks and hindrances to God’s redeeming mercy, should strike from the persons of all the children of the Church that strengthening, comforting sign and seal of God’s covenanted adoption which all the narrowness of the early dispensation could not deny to them, and should cast our offspring out of God’s family unsealed to wander among the cursed heathen? The sign and seal of God’s covenant, so comfortably pledging God’s gracious and necessary help—why should it be granted to the children of our fathers in the old dispensation, but denied to our children amidst the abounding mercies of the gospel? What shadow of a reason for this forbidding conclusion do we find either in the foundations or in the spirit or in the object or in the administration of the covenant? What one thought can reason allege for this chilling limitation? Not one. Therefore

what right has any Christian parent to deny to his child the sacrament of baptism?"

"Simply this," said Mr. Courtney: "I think I may safely venture to prove that infants were *absolutely excluded* both by the commandment of the Saviour and the example of the early Christians. While looking in vain for any precept or example to justify the baptism of infants, we found enough both of precept and example to satisfy my mind, since I have come to reflect about it, that infant baptism is absolutely and clearly *forbidden*." <sup>1</sup>

"That, without hesitation, *I deny*," said Dr. Graham. "But we must postpone this branch of our discussion till we can meet again, for the evening is too far spent to enter upon it now. My main object to-night has been to bring before your minds two great truths: 1. *That the Church of God is substantially the same as set forth in the Old Testament and in the New.* 'If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.'<sup>2</sup> 'If you are Christ's, if you are of the Church, this very fact makes you the seed of Abraham, connects you this day with that covenant which God of old made with the patriarch.

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 294.

<sup>2</sup> Gal. iii. 29.

This is just saying, If you cannot tear away the gospel from Christ, you cannot tear it away from the Abrahamic covenant. Indeed, the *New Testament name is given to the Old Testament covenant*, for Paul says, "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." Thus, if the Scripture or the Scripture's God knows what the gospel is, *the Abrahamic covenant is the gospel.*<sup>1</sup> Now, is this point fully established?"

"Fully, conclusively, beyond a doubt, so far as I am concerned," said Theodore.

"I always believed that," said Grace, "though I never had my mind so forcibly directed to the fact before."

"Of course, of course!" said Mr. Courtney. "The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen *through faith*, preached before the gospel unto Abraham.'<sup>2</sup> I think I can understand this; but for the life of me I can't see a word about baptism in it, or circumcision either. There is no more allusion to either than there is to the lifting up of the brazen serpent in the wilderness,

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 544.

<sup>2</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 298.

or the giving of the law on Sinai, or the falling down of the walls of Jericho."

Dr. Graham smiled. "Divest your mind of that idea of baptism for one moment," he said, "and answer one question: Does Paul say in this verse that *this covenant* which God made with Abraham was the *gospel*, or does he not?"

"I do not know that I wish to deny it," said Mr. Courtney. "I think he does."

"Then I will proceed to the second great truth which I would bring before you," said Dr. Graham, "and which I hope I have made equally clear to you: 'If religion is and must be the same in all generations, then *the great leading principles of religion must be the same in all generations*. The form of the sign and seal of God's great covenant with man is changed with the dispensation, but so also has the *form* of the Passover been changed, and the *form* of public worship has been changed, and the *form* of the ministry, and the *day* of the Sabbath. And this is all that can be changed—the forms of things essential to the Church of God, *not the things themselves*. Was it necessary to the cause of religion in ancient times that there should be a Sabbath? Then we must find a Sabbath in the present dispensation, and we do. Was

it necessary that there should be public worship in ancient times? Then we must find public worship in the present dispensation, and we do. Was it necessary that there should be a ministry to represent God among men? Then we must find a ministry in our day, and we do. Now, was it necessary that there should be an appointed *sign and seal* to impress man's mind through his senses; to rouse man's conscience by a sacramental commitment of himself and family to God, and to encourage man's heart by God's signed and sealed assurance of gracious co-operation? Then we must find such a sign and seal at work in our day, and we do. *Baptism* is the refreshing sign and seal of the gracious Christian dispensation of the great covenant, as circumcision was the painful token of the Old Testament dispensation of the same covenant.'<sup>1</sup> Why, then, should any Christian parent hesitate to present his child for baptism?"

Grace smiled; a look of joy brightened her sweet face, and she was about to speak, when Mr. Courtney interrupted her.

"You forget," he said, with something very like a contemptuous sneer, "that I have under-

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, p. 548.

taken to prove that Christ has commanded us not to do this thing."

"No, I do not forget," said Dr. Graham; "and I will hear on Saturday evening what you have to advance in proof of so remarkable a statement."

Once more the young couple found themselves alone, and Grace turned to her husband with a world of eager questioning in her face as she said,

"Well, my dear, what do you think?"

Theodore laughed. "I think," he replied, "that Dr. Graham has a clear head, a calm judgment and a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures."

"But about *infant baptism*?" said Grace.

"I wait to see if Mr. Courtney can bring forward anything more in support of his views," said Theodore. "But thus far our friend the doctor has so clearly made out his case that he carries my convictions with him."

"And mine," said Grace, fervently. "Oh, Theodore, I am so glad to believe that our dear little baby may have *a right to a place in the Church of God!*"





### CHAPTER III.

*MR. COURTNEY FAILS TO CONVINCe DR. GRAHAM THAT  
CHRIST FORBIDS INFANT BAPTISM.*

**Q**UEN Saturday evening Mr. Courtney was early on the ground, and hardly had Dr. Graham entered when he drew up to the table with his Bible in his hand.

“Let us find and examine the commission of our Saviour to his disciples,” he said. “Here it is in Matthew: ‘Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.’ Not one word about children here.”

“Now, I differ from you there,” said Dr. Graham. “The command given to the apostles was, ‘baptize all nations;’ infants were equally *included*. If in the term ‘all males’ every boy-child was a party, so in the term ‘all nations’ every state of life in the community was a party.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “Taylor’s Apostolic Baptism,” p. 73.

"Matthew says *teach* them and *then* baptize them," said Mr. Courtney. "So they must be such as can be taught. But can a little babe 'mewling and puking in its mother's arms' be taught the doctrines of salvation by Jesus Christ?"<sup>1</sup>

"Nay, it is not surely necessary to cast contempt upon the dear little babies," said Dr. Graham, while Grace colored with indignation both at the coarseness of the schoolmaster's speech and his slighting mention of the little ones.

Mr. Courtney saw that he had made a mistake, and hastily proceeded:

"No Greek scholar will dispute that *mathe-teusate*, in the first part of this commission, means make disciples as certainly as *didaskontes* means teaching in the last part of it. Nor can you, or any man of common sense, pretend that any are commanded to be baptized but those who have first been made disciples."<sup>2</sup>

"Yet I am led to the conclusion that our Saviour's command, in the circumstances in which it was given, inculcates the doctrine of infant baptism,"<sup>3</sup> said Dr. Graham, calmly. "It must have

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

<sup>3</sup> "Peters on Baptism," p. 139.

been so understood by those to whom it was addressed. It must also have been intended by the Saviour to be so understood; and in view of the prevalent usage of the time in which it was spoken, I cannot understand it otherwise."

"But this commission says nothing about baptizing the children of believing parents,"<sup>1</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "By it the ministers of Christ are commanded to baptize *disciples* (according to Matthew) and *believers* (according to Mark); but in regard to the *children* of these disciples and believers, they are both as silent as the grave."

"Whence you argue that Christ the Master does not expressly teach the doctrine of infant baptism, and therefore refutes it,"<sup>2</sup> said Dr. Graham. "I reply, *Christ does not formally repeal the doctrine of the church membership of infants,* AND THEREFORE ESTABLISHES IT. The best rendering of the commission is this: 'Go ye, therefore, and *proselyte* the nations, baptizing them,' etc. Now, what exactly in this commission did Christ mean his apostles to do when he commanded them to *disciple*, to *proselyte*, the nations? A well-established principle of interpretation settles with

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855, pp. 555, 560.

perfect precision the proper reply to this question. Language is always to be understood in view of the sentiments and usages of the party speaking and the party addressed. Jesus and his apostles were Jews. The opinions and the practices of the Jews in regard to proselyting must therefore fix decisively the meaning of this passage. Who doubts this? Every man knows that things are not formed to fit words, but words are chosen to express things. The word *proselyte*, therefore, must come to the then prevalent practice of the Jews for its signification. For certainly we perpetrate the most violent absurdity if we attempt to force the ancient practice of the Jews into conformity with any independent notion which we may choose to entertain of the meaning of a word. This matter of proselyting among the Jews—what was it? What did they do when they proselyted the stranger to Judaism? The answer is this: They proselyted him by the act of circumcision. Who were the parties circumcised when proselytism was practiced by the Jews? The answer is at hand: The parties circumcised were always the *children with their parents*, and this was an every-day fact with which Jesus and his apostles and all the Jews were perfectly familiar. Jennings

lays down the doctrine thus: 'In proselyting two things are observable: 1. That when a man becomes a proselyte all his males were to be circumcised as well as himself, whereby his children were admitted into the visible Church of God on his right as the father.'<sup>1</sup> So say all the authorities. The idea of including the parents in teaching all nations, but excluding the children, for aught we know never once entered the mind of the speaker or hearer. The history of the nation, the practice of the heathen, the universal opinions and habits of men in their day, imperatively constrained the apostles, in the absence of the slightest countermanding word from Christ, to carry out baptism in the new dispensation precisely as they had carried out circumcision in the old—that is, *they must baptize the children with their parents.*"

"Of course," said Theodore. "How strange it is that I never thought of this before! Yet I have thought a great deal on this subject of infant baptism."

"But Christ did speak," said Mr. Courtney, hastily, "and by him infant baptism is *clearly forbidden*. It is forbidden in the commission itself.

<sup>1</sup>"Jewish Antiquities," vol. i., p. 132.

The command to baptize *believers* is a command *not to baptize* any but believers. The command to make disciples *first*, and then baptize them, is a command *not to baptize* any who are not first made disciples. If I tell my servant to go and wash all the old sheep in my flock, it is equivalent to a prohibition to wash the little lambs.”<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Graham laughed a little at this singular mode of reasoning.

“Your case is not analogous to the subject,” he said. “You should rather state it thus: Christ said ‘*Proselyte all nations*,’ not only using a general term, but also a word that always was understood to embrace children with their parents. Now, if I said to you, ‘Go, take all *my flock* and wash them,’ knowing that it always had been the custom to wash the lambs with the sheep, and that this custom was well known to you, what right would you have to suppose I meant that this custom was to be changed, and that the little lambs were to be left unwashed?”

“I do not think you have proved your point here, Mr. Courtney,” said Theodore, dryly.

“There is one saying of our Saviour which seems to encourage infant baptism, as I under-

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 294.

stand it," said Grace. "Jesus said, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Westervelt," said Mr. Courtney, "if I say that to my mind there can be no inference about the object or purpose for which these children were brought, because it is expressly and very definitely stated in the text. They brought them that he should *lay his hands on them and pray*. This was all they came for, and this was all he did. He did not baptize them. He did not command them to be baptized. He merely laid his hands on them and departed.<sup>1</sup> But there is an irresistible inference that I draw from this text, and that is that *the disciples had never been accustomed to infant baptism*. If they had been in the habit of baptizing children, they could never have objected to their coming to be blessed by Jesus. They would have regarded it as a thing of course. But if they had, like the Baptist churches, received only adults, and them only on repentance and profession of faith, it was not at all strange that they should reprove those who brought the little children, who could not believe. And there was a beautiful propriety in

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 214.

the lesson which Jesus taught them—viz., that though children were *not to be baptized*, and were *not members of his Church*, yet they were to be objects of *intense interest* and deep solicitude to his people. Though they were not to be baptized, they were to be prayed for. Parents, therefore, ought to bring their little children to Christ by faith and prayer, for that he has commanded, but not by baptism, for that he has forbidden by requiring those who are baptized first to believe.”

“Very plausibly argued,” said Dr. Graham. “But consider other things in this history which were unquestionably true, and doubtless contributed to make up the mind which impelled these mothers to visit the Saviour.

“1. John and Jesus had solemnly testified to Judea that the old dispensation was passing away, and that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. These mothers believed the proclamation; for had they deemed Jesus an impostor, they had never sought his blessing upon their children. The changes that are to take place! What are these changes? How will God’s people be affected by them? What disposition will they make of our children?



“2. The religion of these mothers, it must not be forgotten, had scarcely furnished them the faintest conception of spiritual blessings *unsealed*. It is highly probable that they had never heard of a human being whom they judged to possess one spiritual favor from heaven who did not carry in his person, or in the person or persons of him or them who represented her, if a female, the mark—the appointed outward mark—of God’s adoption. The children in their arms bore the sign and seal of covenant mercy, and this doubtless encouraged them to anticipate his gracious consideration in their behalf.

“3. Jesus knew all their mind. Now, if he knew that the kingdom of heaven would soon strike the seal of God’s covenant from the persons of all the children of the Church, and, to the dismay of every parent in Judea, publicly amalgamate them with the children of the heathen, is it not highly probable that he will undeceive these applicants by a direct explanation upon the subject? Is it not certain that he will at least carefully avoid all such language and conduct as is calculated to awaken the very slightest expectation of any sensible connection between their children and the kingdom of heaven? What

does he do? Mark the interview. Some (like the Baptists in our day) would throw discouragement upon the hopes which were swelling in the breasts of these mothers. The conduct of the disciples would fain indicate that there would exist no very strong sympathy, no very close connection, between the Founder of the new economy and the children of God's people. But how promptly did Jesus come to their relief! He substantially responded, 'I am the Founder and Head of the kingdom of heaven. Little children are not to be separated from the kingdom hereafter, any more than they have been heretofore. Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"<sup>1</sup>

"You cannot deny, Mr. Courtney, that by the kingdom of heaven, in this passage, is meant the *visible Church*, and that Jesus expressly mentions children as members of it?" said Grace, eagerly.

"Indeed, Mrs. Westervelt, he mentions no such thing,"<sup>2</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "It does not matter at all whether the kingdom of heaven means the Church visible or invisible. He does not say that

<sup>1</sup> "Presbyterian Quarterly Review," March, 1855.

<sup>2</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 215.

children are members of it, but that its members are like children. He does not say his Church is composed of children, but of such as are like children. For in the corresponding passage in Luke and Mark he goes right on and explains by saying, 'Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in no case enter therein.'"

"But," said Dr. Graham, "there are several considerations of no small weight against this interpretation, and in favor of that which makes the phrase, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' or *to such the kingdom of heaven belongs*, relate to *the children themselves*, and *to other children like them*.<sup>1</sup> The first reason I shall mention is that the term, used properly, signifies the nature or quality of the thing to which it is applied, and not to the resemblance which something else bears to it. Accordingly, the real import of the passage is the same as '*of these and such as these* is the kingdom of heaven.' My second reason is that the declaration, 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' is expressly made the *reason* for suffering *little children themselves to come to him*. But how could this be a reason for suffering the little children to

<sup>1</sup> "Woods on Infant Baptism," p. 62.

come to Christ, if it were not that *they* belonged to his kingdom and certain others who resembled them? ‘Place the history before you. The children of believers have always been members of the kingdom of God. These mothers bring their children, wearing the mark of present membership, to seek for them the blessing of the Head of the new administration. He proclaims in their hearing to all who surround him, “Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.”’<sup>1</sup> It is a rule in the construction of language that words are always to be understood in the sense in which the speaker knows that the hearer will understand them. Now, according to this rule, what possible interpretation could these women have put upon the Saviour’s conduct and language other than this: ‘Whereas your children have been hitherto distinguished from the children of the heathen by visible adoption into God’s family under the Abrahamic covenant, so shall it be with them in the kingdom of heaven?’”

“You forget the Saviour’s own words as recorded in Luke and Mark,” said Mr. Courtney, “where he says, ‘Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom

<sup>1</sup> “Presbyterian Quarterly Review,” March, 1855.

of God as a little child shall in no case enter therein.' ”

“No, I do not forget,” said Dr. Graham, “and that expression is very easily explained.<sup>1</sup> After Christ had shown his affection for the little children who were brought to him, and had declared that the privileges of his kingdom belonged to them, it was perfectly according to his usual manner to introduce another subject, and by means of the lovely children who were then before him, and who were entitled to such consideration, to teach his disciples what disposition they must possess. It was clearly another subject, though introduced on the occasion of the children’s being brought to him. Jesus chose that such an occasion should not pass without profit to his disciples, whom he doubtless saw to be in special need of the instruction then given them.”

“With all your talk you have not proved that Christ commanded the baptism of infants,” said Mr. Courtney.

“Not to *your* satisfaction, perhaps,” said Dr. Graham. “But you have not proved that he did *not* command it, and with you rests the burden of proof in this matter. ‘Christ held your doctrine

<sup>1</sup>“Woods on Infant Baptism,” p. 69.

or he held ours—that children should not or that they should be baptized.<sup>1</sup> If he held *your* doctrine, necessity is upon him, and he must speak out. For the standards of the Church and the faith of the Church and the practice of the Church and universal public sentiment are all against him; and to put down this mighty testimony of God in the past, and set up an opposite sentiment and practice for the future, nothing can avail short of an express and an authoritative *countermanding* of all prior teaching. But this Christ did not do, as you certainly must acknowledge. Then he does *not* hold your doctrine. If he held *our* doctrine, there was no necessity for the utterance of a word. His silence leaves unsilenced and operative upon the world all the fundamental, well-known and well-received teaching of God in the prior dispensation.”

“You may not have convinced Mr. Courtney,” said Theodore, “but you have fully convinced *me*; and if I have at all learned to read the expression of my wife’s face, she too is a convert to your views, Dr. Graham.”

On hearing these words Mr. Courtney rose from his seat in great indignation.

<sup>1</sup>“Presbyterian Quarterly Review,” March, 1855.

"If this be true, there is, of course, no more to be said," he exclaimed. "You are easily convinced, Mr. Westervelt; but I might have known that you had already decided the matter in your own mind, and that this would be no fair investigation."

At this the color that suffused the face of Theodore and the sudden flash in his eyes showed that his temper was somewhat moved.

"You have no right to accuse me of unfairness, Mr. Courtney," he said. "You well know how carefully I have been taught that infant baptism has no Scripture warrant, and how completely my mind has been imbued with that idea. I have been erroneously taught, for now I find a strong scriptural authority for it in the Abrahamic covenant and in the unity of the Church. You admit that the gospel was preached unto Abraham, and that Abraham believed in it.<sup>1</sup> I have often heard you say so."

"Of course," said Mr. Courtney, hastily. "He trusted in the Christ to come, and so was, in a certain sense, a member of Christ's Church. So were all who, like Abraham, believed God, and it was counted unto them for righteousness. They

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 306.

were not introduced into it by circumcision, nor was Abraham himself, for it was twenty-four years after he heard and believed the gospel before he was circumcised. He was a member of Christ's mystical body and an heir of the heavenly Canaan without the seal of circumcision. By it he and his seed became the heirs of the *earthly* Canaan. This was its object, and no more. This is all that any one can make out of all that is said of the relationship of the patriarch and believers." <sup>1</sup>

"It is strange that you can maintain this opinion, Mr. Courtney," said Dr. Graham, gently. "It is so very evident that, over and above all that was local and temporary with regard to their entrance into Canaan, the express stipulation of this 'everlasting covenant' was, 'And I will be their God.' That circumcision was the badge of this covenant in its spiritual as well as in its temporal aspect is obvious, because the two were united as the soul and body in man. The soul may exist without the body, but the body cannot exist without the soul. A man might embrace the promise of redemption made to Abraham and have no interest in the promise of the land of Canaan.

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 306.



Ishmael, for example, was circumcised as soon as this covenant was made with his father Abraham, although he was *expressly excluded* from any portion of the inheritance. So also Esau was circumcised as well as Jacob, although he was not to inherit the land of Canaan. So far, therefore, from circumcision having exclusive reference to the national covenant, it had primary and special reference to the *spiritual* covenant, being administered to those who were *excluded from all share* in the *national* privileges of the children of Abraham. When the father of the faithful received the great promise of redemption and bound himself to take Jehovah to be his God, he made this promise and engagement for Ishmael as well as for himself. Isaac made the same profession and covenant for Esau as he did for Jacob. Ishmael and Esau were as much bound to take Jehovah to be their God, and to look for salvation through the promised seed, as were Isaac and Jacob. Although the spiritual element might be professedly embraced by those who had no part in the temporal blessings of Abraham, the reverse was not true. No man could be circumcised with exclusive reference to the national covenant. He could not enroll himself among the children of Abraham, and

claim as one of his descendants a part of the national inheritance, without at the same time entering into covenant with God. A Jew who did not thus profess allegiance to God, who renounced all interest in the promise of the Messiah, was an impossibility. By being a Jew he professed the whole Jewish faith and promised fidelity to the whole religion of the Hebrews.<sup>1</sup> In view of these facts—and that they are facts no student of the Bible can deny—I am at a loss to understand, sir, how you can view this rite of circumcision merely as a sort of carnal ordinance.”

“That is not strange,” said Mr. Courtney, with a sarcastic tone. “You call the Jewish nation the *Church of God*, and tell us that the Christian Church is the same under a different dispensation.<sup>2</sup> But Christ calls that nation *the world*, in opposition to his Church. The disciples to whom Christ spoke (John xv. 19) were men in good and regular standing in the Jewish nation, which you call the Church. Yet Christ says, I have chosen you *out of the world*, and therefore the world—that is, the Jewish nation—hateth you. Paul was not only a member, but an eminent member, of

<sup>1</sup> “Princeton Review,” April, 1858, p. 368.

<sup>2</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 306.

this Jewish body; but he says that he was a persecutor of the Church of God. Nicodemus was a 'master in Israel,' but Christ told him he could not come into his Church till he had been born again. Jews needed conversion as much as any men did before they could make up any portion of the *Church* of God. How do you explain facts like these, Dr. Graham?"

"Simply by regarding them as proofs that there is a vast distinction between the Church *visible* and the Church *invisible*," said Dr. Graham. "With the *visible* Church a man may be linked by a profession of faith, by attending to certain outward forms, by submitting to the prescribed rite, while to the *invisible* Church, THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD, *either in the old dispensation or in the new*, his *only* title to membership lies in *regeneration*, or the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Thus Paul says, 'He is not a Jew that is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew that is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.' Rom. ii. 28, 29. And again: 'For they are not all Israel which are of Israel.' Rom. ix. 6. And again: 'For we

are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.' Christ recognizes this distinction when he says, 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you.' Also Paul when, in writing to the members of the *visible* Church in *the new dispensation*, he says, 'For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.'

"And the *true* Church of God, in both dispensations, is one in this also," suggested Theodore. "One can in either be a member of the *visible* Church in good standing, yet be a stranger to the TRUE Church, or even *opposed* to it."

"And all who believingly acknowledge the one head, even Christ, are members of THAT TRUE CHURCH," said Grace.

"Yes," replied Dr. Graham, "whether they rested in him 'as promised afore by his prophets

in the Holy Scriptures,' or whether they rest in him now as 'declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.'"

"Strange that sectarian differences should so divide in heart those who will be one family in heaven!" said Grace, in a tone of sadness.

"Strange indeed!" said Dr. Graham, while Mr. Courtney's manner changed, and he held out his hand to his opponent.

"Pardon me if I have said anything in the heat of controversy which has seemed unchristian or discourteous," he said. "And you, Theodore, must forgive my hasty words. Let us say no more to-night on the subject of infant baptism. But grant me one favor. Let us give one more evening to the discussion before you decide to have your baby baptized, and let Mr. Percy be present."

"My father returns from his Western trip next week," said Grace, blushing. "Of course I shall be glad to consult him, although it is but fair to tell you, Mr. Courtney, that the matter is fully decided in my own mind."

"Not another word for the present," said Mr. Courtney as he hurried from the room.

Dr. Graham smiled, and then he sighed.

“He is sorely tried with all this,” he said, “and he is a good man. I am almost sorry that I invited him to meet with us.”

“I am not,” said Theodore. “I had rather hear both sides fairly ; and Mr. Courtney gives us the pure Baptist view of this subject, although he sometimes thrusts it forward rather roughly.”





## CHAPTER IV.

*NEW PARTIES IN THE DISCUSSION.—PRACTICAL BENEFITS  
OF INFANT BAPTISM.*

**G**RACE WESTERVELT stood on the hearth-rug in the library with her baby in her arms. There was a slight air of disturbance in her manner, and a flush of expectation upon her cheek which made her very beautiful. The baby lay placid and content in his safe resting-place, yet his great wide-open eyes were fixed upon his mother's face as if in wonder that he attracted so little of her regard. Theodore rested his arm on the corner of the mantel-piece, and looked down upon the mother and child with an air of calm, happy proprietorship. There was much tenderness, yet a little mischief, in his face as he said,

"You had better sit down, Grace. You will tire yourself."



The Young Parents.





"Oh, Theodore, do not make me nervous by your teasing," said Grace. "I cannot bear it just now. The train came in as usual, I suppose, and they will soon be here. I am expecting them every moment."

"And will you not be glad to see them?" said Theodore. "I think it was an excellent arrangement to have them come at once to us. Our good mother will have time to rest from her journey before she takes up the cares of housekeeping again."

"Oh yes," said Grace; "I want to see my mother more than I can tell you, but I am afraid—"

She paused, and her husband said, laughingly,

"You are afraid! Well, I truly believe you are. Why, what a little coward you are, Grace! One would think your parents were the veriest tyrants instead of being the kindest, most indulgent, most sympathizing—"

"Can you not see," interrupted Grace, "that it is for the very reasons you have named that I so hate to differ from them, to do anything that I know will annoy them?"

Theodore was about to reply, when there was a step in the hall. Grace sprang forward and

reached the door just in time to see it thrown open, and to be clasped in her father's arms.

"My dear daughter!" cried Mr. Percy as he kissed both the mother and child; "it is really refreshing to see you once more. Your mother here has fairly pined to be at home again, although we have had a very pleasant journey and have been most hospitably entertained everywhere."

"I was not the only impatient one," said Theodosia, smiling, "though I must bear the blame of our hurried home-coming, I suppose, since Mr. Percy chooses to have it so."

It was a delightful family reunion, where heart answered to heart and every face beamed with love. After the travelers had been refreshed with the best that the house afforded, they all gathered in the library for a good time. It was a favorite household room, this library, abounding in every comfort, harmonious in all its appointments, yet with nothing too fine for common use. Heavy crimson curtains kept out every chilling current of air and gave to the sunbeams a rosy glow. A blazing fire sparkled in the low, polished grate. A few plants bloomed in the windows and threw out a delicate fragrance. Couches and low cushioned chairs were there to suit almost every

taste. And the beautiful book-cases, which fairly lined the walls, were filled with books of every description which could in the least interest the young couple.

Here the family were assembled after tea in converse sweet. Mr. Percy had thrown himself into the depths of a large arm-chair, and was lazily watching the fire as he talked or listened, as best suited his mood. Theodosia was seated in a low rocking-chair, holding her grandchild in her arms and wooing him to notice her by every sweet womanly device that she could think of. Grace, seated on a footstool at her mother's feet, looked so girlish in her whole air and attitude that it was difficult for Theodosia to realize that she too was a wife and a mother. Theodore was in his brightest humor, and was talking over the events of the day with Mr. Percy, when Mr. Courtney walked into the room.

Now, an interruption in a strictly family party like this is often disagreeable, but this particular interruption on this particular evening was peculiarly so, if one might judge from its effects. Theodore rose to welcome his guest, but was constrained and embarrassed in doing so. Grace ceased from her merry talk, her face flushed

deeply, and she was evidently greatly disturbed. Theodosia looked annoyed, and even Mr. Percy wished in his heart that Courtney could have left them to themselves just for this one evening. Mr. Courtney alone was quite at his ease, and in high spirits, even, at the chance which had led him to happen in so opportunely.

"I did not know that you were expected till to-morrow, Mr. Percy," he said, "but it is well you have come. Your daughter here needs looking after, I can assure you."

Mr. Percy looked at Grace, and was astonished at her evident confusion.

"I am wholly at a loss as to your meaning, Mr. Courtney," he said, with a half-offended air.

"Then she has not told you of all our meetings in this very room?" said Mr. Courtney. "The truth is our old enemy Dr. Graham has been at work again. By the way, he will be here in a few moments, for he told me that it was his intention to call here this evening."

"Dr. Graham!" said Mr. Percy, startled out of his half-sleepy mood and recumbent attitude at the mention of that name. "I did not know that he was in the city."

"Well, he is in the city," said Mr. Courtney,

"and what do you think he is about? Not content with winning your daughter to his sprinkling views in regard to baptism, he is determined that your little grandson there shall be a water-made Christian before he is a year old if he can effect it."

Mr. Percy turned upon his daughter a reproachful glance.

"Grace," he said, "can this be true?"

While Grace hesitated how to frame her reply Mr. Courtney answered for her.

"Indeed, it is true," he said; "and your daughter here, with that natural love for her child which leads every mother to demand everything in heaven and earth for her own baby, is more than half a convert to his views already."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Mr. Percy, with an air of decided annoyance. "I thought you quite agreed with me, Grace, that infant baptism is a senseless formality?"

"I do not think so now," said Grace, timidly. "Dr. Graham has convinced me that it is not only a precious privilege, but a binding duty, to dedicate my child to God in baptism. He is mine, my dear little baby, and I am Christ's. Surely, if I give my child to him in a solemn covenant,

he will own and bless the act. I know it—I feel it. *It must be so.*”

Theodosia gave her daughter a glance of tender sympathy, and pressed her grandchild more closely to her heart. Theodore took his stand in front of the fire, placed his hands behind him, and faced his father-in-law with a respectful but resolute air.

“I am sorry that this discussion has been started to-night,” he said, “but it must have come sooner or later.”

As he pronounced the words the door opened and Dr. Graham entered. He seemed surprised at the group assembled, but on recognizing Mr. and Mrs. Percy welcomed them very cordially.

“You are just in time, Dr. Graham,” said Mr. Courtney. “I was telling Mr. Percy here what you have been doing in his absence, and Mrs. Westervelt has been putting in a plea for infant baptism.”

For a moment a frown darkened Dr. Graham’s ample brow, and an exclamation very like “Impertinent meddler!” broke from his lips. Then he said, “Surely we need not thrust ourselves into a theological discussion on an occasion like the present.”

"We seem compelled to do it," said Theodore.  
"Mr. Courtney seems to demand it of us."

"I thought theological discussions were the delight of you Presbyterian doctors of divinity," said Mr. Courtney, "and that you were always ready for them."

"In one sense you are right," said Dr. Graham, with dignity. "He who is rooted and grounded in the truth need never fear to state his opinions or shrink from defending them."

"Surely you do not mean to assert that it does any real good to make a little baby a member of Christ's Church, Dr. Graham?" said Mr. Percy.

"Indeed I do," said Dr. Graham.

"I thought you had too much sense, sir. What possible reasons can you give for such a belief?" said Mr. Percy. "Where in Scripture or in common sense can you find one plea to offer for it?"

"I find it first in the intimate relation between children and parents,"<sup>1</sup> said Dr. Graham. "They are not only partakers of the same nature, but the life of the one is continued in the other. There is, moreover, the bond of common interest. The destiny of the child is involved in that of the parent. If the father becomes a citizen of a

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," April, 1858, p. 352.



country, he makes his children citizens. In like manner, when a man becomes a Christian, when he lays hold of the covenant of grace for himself, his children are to be regarded as doing the same thing. He has a right to represent them and act for them. As the father chooses for the child his country, so he chooses for him his religion. This is a matter of necessity both by the law of God and the constitution of society. The Baptist doctrine, therefore, that a man in becoming a Christian or entering the Church does not make his children Christians, is opposed to all the analogies of political and religious life. No wonder that the Baptists stand alone in the vast field, not of Christendom only, but of humanity. So wide is the application of the principle that children are included in their parents, and enter with them into the civil or religious relations which they assume, that an eloquent Irish Episcopal minister exclaimed, 'There are but two places in the whole universe of God from which infants are excluded. The one is hell; the other is the Baptist Church.' There must be something wrong in a doctrine which leads to such a violation of all analogies, human and divine."

"You have said just what I would like to have

said, Dr. Graham," said Theodore. "This is a truth that must commend itself to the natural feeling of every parent."

"But this is not a matter of feeling merely," said Mr. Percy. "It is a matter of religion. Does God command, does God allow, this infant membership? That is the question. It is not what you and Grace would like."

"Yes, he does," said Dr. Graham. "In all covenants which God has ever formed with men their children have been included. The covenant made with Adam was not only for himself, but for all his posterity descending from him by ordinary generation. It is a plain historical fact that his apostasy was the apostasy of his race. When God entered into covenant with his eternal Son as the representative of his people, it was without their assent or consent, knowledge or co-operation. And yet they, in virtue of that covenant, are made partakers of all the benefits of the redemption. When Abraham embraced the promise and received in his own person the seal of the covenant, all connected with him and represented by him were included in the compact. When God renewed at Mount Sinai the covenant with his chosen people, it was not with those of adult age only,

but also with their little ones.<sup>1</sup> So much for the history of the race in the old dispensation.”<sup>2</sup>

“Yes,” said Mr. Percy. “But what about the history of the Church after the kingdom of Christ was established?”

“I find the same principle recognized,” said Dr. Graham, “and established. When the Son of God appeared, he left no equivocal testimony as to the right of the children to recognition and place in the gospel Church: ‘Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.’ So, too, when the commission was renewed to Peter by the risen Saviour, and his apostasy forgiven, his profession of love is answered first by the injunction to care for the children of the Church, as being lambs of Christ: ‘Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, *Feed my lambs.*’ Nor was Peter unmindful of the charge thus given him. On the day of Pentecost mark his words: ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For

<sup>1</sup> Ex. xix. 20; Deut. v.; vi.; xix. 9-13.

<sup>2</sup> “Princeton Review,” April, 1858, p. 355.

the promise is unto you, *and to your children*, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.' 'Ye are the children of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And *in thy seed* shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.' " <sup>1</sup>

"Go on," said Theodore, as Dr. Graham paused. "This is what I call a summing up of the evidence."

"We come next to Paul," said Dr. Graham. "Mark his assurance to the Gentiles that *this grace of the covenant is sealed to the child by virtue of the faith of the believing parent*. 'The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now are they *holy*.' Also, Paul, in writing to the church at Ephesus, has a special clause addressed to the *children of the church*: 'Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.' Now, what children were these that *were in the church* but those that had been brought into the church by baptism, children of the covenant?"

"You make out a clearer case for yourself than I thought you could, that I must admit," said Mr.

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," Jan., 1863, p. 76.

Percy, who had been listening attentively to Dr. Graham's words.

"In view of all this, consider the cases of *household* baptisms recorded in the New Testament," said Dr. Graham, "where households were baptized on profession of faith in the parent, and is not the conclusion inevitable that God has recognized the principle that the child is represented in the parent from the beginning of the world until now?"

"I cannot understand why I have never seen this so plainly before," said Grace.

"There is another thought connected with the little ones in the Church which is very interesting to me," said Dr. Graham; "and that is that in both dispensations we have recorded a wholesale slaughter of the innocents. When the Egyptians, jealous of the growing prosperity and strength of the people of God, ordered all the young babes to be murdered, and when, at the birth of Christ, by the decree of cruel Herod, babies were made the first martyrs in his cause, it would be strange indeed if, in the providence of God, these babies, through their connection with his visible Church, should be called to suffer, and yet have no special covenant rights and privileges in it."

A dangerous sympathy with the doctor's emotion was visible in the faces of Mr. Percy and Theodosia. Mr. Courtney hastened to the rescue.

"That all sounds very sweet and sentimental," he said, "but it does not change my views in the least. If I should speak of this act which you perform as a religious duty, as I think it deserves, I should characterize it as a heinous sin, an act of daring rebellion against God."<sup>1</sup>

"You take strong ground, brother," said Mr. Percy. "Is that not saying rather more than charity will warrant?"

"No, it is the simple truth," said Mr. Courtney. "In the first place, infant baptism, as practiced by the Presbyterians in this country, is a continually repeated falsehood."<sup>2</sup>

"How so, sir?" said Dr. Graham, with an air of surprise.

"Simply because you don't act out your principles,"<sup>3</sup> said Mr. Courtney. "Your churches are filled with unbelievers, but you refuse to recognize them. You daily repudiate your own acts and continually falsify your own theory. You baptize infants, and you say you do it to introduce them into the Church of Christ."

<sup>1</sup>"Theodosia Ernest," p. 314. <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 317. <sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 311.

“Hold!” said Dr. Graham. “That is not exactly true.<sup>1</sup> In popular language, indeed, it is often said that circumcision introduced a child into the Hebrew theocracy, and that baptism introduces children into the church, just as a man is inducted into office by the ceremony of inauguration. But coronation does not make a king; neither does baptism make a Christian. The scriptural ground of infant church membership, as I have endeavored to show, is *their birth*. They are born, as our standards express it, within the pale of the visible Church. As the children of Adam are born under the covenant—*i. e.*, under its curse—made with him, as the children of Abraham were born under the Abrahamic covenant and the later Jews under the Mosaic covenant, so the children of those who embrace the new covenant are born within its pale. Circumcision did not make a man a Jew; it was a solemn *recognition of his birthright*, of which the neglect of circumcision was the rejection. Neither does baptism make children Christians. It is the divinely-appointed mode of recognizing them as members of the church, and of claiming for them a part of its promises and privileges. The neglect of infant

<sup>1</sup>“Princeton Review,” April, 1858.

baptism is therefore the rejection of those promises and privileges. It is refusing to acknowledge them as belonging to our children."

"Word it as you will," said Mr. Courtney, impatiently, "you cannot deny that you profess to regard these children as church members. But you don't believe that they really are. You never treat them as church members.<sup>1</sup> You give them none of the privileges of church members. You don't count them on your list of church members. They do not regard themselves as church members. They are practically as separate from the church as the children of the infidel or the Hottentot."

"I wish I could fully repel this charge," said Dr. Graham, "but there is too much ground for it. It may well be doubted whether our Church, as a whole, has yet come to anything like a realizing sense of its relations and duties in this matter, and of the mighty power of this lever, by which she may do so much to elevate mankind.<sup>2</sup> In many of our congregations where children are presented for baptism, the transaction is regarded as mainly one between the parents and God.

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 311.

<sup>2</sup> "Princeton Review," Oct., 1861.



The church does not suitably recognize herself as a responsible party, bound to the parents, the children and God, in this solemn ordinance."

"I was going to add that it is thus, and only thus, that you retain any degree of purity in your actual membership," said Mr. Courtney. "And this simple fact, that you are obliged to treat the baptized infants when they grow up as though they had not been baptized at all in order to preserve the spirituality and purity of the Church, is of itself sufficient proof that the celebrated historian Neander tells the truth when he says, 'It is certain that Christ did not ordain infant baptism.'"<sup>1</sup>

"Rather say," said Dr. Graham, "that when the Church, in the weakness of her faith, thus excuses herself from her high responsibilities it is principally due to her sinful shortcoming, that the institution of infant baptism is not more highly esteemed."<sup>2</sup> For one great evil of this inadequate system is that, while it makes infant baptism a seal of Christian teaching and training to be given to the child, it always in some degree, and often wholly, prevents such instruction and nur-

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 312.

<sup>2</sup> "Princeton Review," Oct., 1861.

ture or frustrates their efficacy.<sup>1</sup> After all, he who comes to Christ must be born, 'not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.' John i. 12. And herein HE will be true to his own covenants. It is in Zion that the children of the Church are born to newness of life. Since God has promised to be their God, it is in training them as if they were his, as if it were alone congruous with their position to walk as his children in faith, love, hope and all holy obedience, that we are to look for that inworking Spirit and outworking holiness, commensurate with their years, which shall seal them as sons and daughters of the Lord almighty. This is what we believe to be the blessed significance and intent of infant baptism."

"But you admit that your churches deny in practice what they proclaim in theory," said Mr. Courtney. "Now, is it no harm thus, in the house of God, as a religious act and in the name of Jesus, to proclaim such practical falsehoods to the world?"<sup>2</sup>

"It is," said Dr. Graham. "Let the Church repent of this sin and forsake it. Let her at once

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," Jan., 1857.

<sup>2</sup> "Theodosia Ernest," p. 319.

take and maintain her true position. As to the parents, in this ordinance she pledges them her sympathy and assistance in their arduous work. Let her redeem her pledge. Let her combine her faith and importunity with theirs in pleading God's covenant promise. Let her influence and example be added to theirs in enforcing the teachings of Scripture. Let her ministers unfold the sacred oracles in the pulpit, enforcing the lessons of the nursery. Let them visit the little ones at home and in the Sabbath-school to interest and instruct them in the great truths pertaining to God and to themselves, to time and to eternity. To the humble, earnest parent such co-operation is encouraging and comforting in the highest degree.<sup>1</sup>

“And as to God, to whom the Church is related in this transaction, the posture in which it places her is equally important. She takes under her oversight the lambs of his flock. Her faith takes hold of the divine covenant, ‘I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee.’ Here her hope lies. She lives and is strengthened in this faith as she brings her sons and daughters to the God of Abraham. Here they are. Help us to believe! Show thyself a covenant-keeping God! Here she

<sup>1</sup> “*Princeton Review*,” Oct., 1861.

hangs, having anchor-hold on Jehovah. Tear her from this, and where can she rest? How can she hope to live and flourish if not in and through her own offspring? This has always been the line of her perpetuation—the main channel of her progress. Where will she look if this be removed? Even those who reject this covenant relation and its seal yet look to the same source for growth and continuance—*i. e.*, to their offspring—but without a tithe of the confidence and comfort granted to those who lay hold on God as this ordinance teaches. Theirs is but a trembling hope, existing in spite of an unfriendly theory, while ours is a confidence begotten by the truth.”

“You are eloquent in defence of your opinion, Dr. Graham,” said Theodosia, gently. “In listening to you I find a deeper, higher, holier meaning in infant baptism than I have ever seen in it before.”

“I can say with Felix, ‘Almost thou persuadest me,’” said Mr. Percy. “And yet—”

“And yet the truth remains the same,” said Mr. Courtney: “the baptism of an infant is an act of high-handed rebellion against the Son of God!”<sup>1</sup>

“Oh, Mr. Courtney,” cried Grace, in great ex-

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 319.

citement, "how *can* you say it? How *dare* you say it? It is not true."

"I will prove it," said Mr. Courtney. "When Christ came into the world, one great object, if not the greatest object, of his mission was to establish his visible Church. He set it up himself. He instructed his disciples carefully in the nature of its laws. Now, the most important of these rules was that which fixed the terms of membership in his kingdom. Christ was organizing not a temporal but a spiritual kingdom. The subjects of this kingdom were to be converted men and women, who loved God and lived to his glory. The members of this Church were to be living epistles, known and read of all, describing the nature and results of his religion in their hearts and lives. How, then, can he look without abhorrence and indignation upon that act in which a minister of this Church, claiming to act by his authority, subverts the very foundation of his Church, changes its nature and defeats the very object of its establishment by introducing into it, knowingly and willfully, persons who are confessedly not penitents, not believers, not regenerate, but the children of wrath even as others?"<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Theodosia Ernes," p. 320.

“Can you not see, Mr. Courtney,” said Dr. Graham, “that your foundation in this grave charge is one that we do not accept? We do not believe that Christ came to establish a *new Church*, but to fulfill the promise on which *his Church rested from the beginning*. We find a law of God under the old dispensation which Christ does not declare to be set aside in the new. We find that infant children, *by the command of God*, were brought into *covenant relation with him*, and that special spiritual and religious blessings were promised to them through that relation. What God, therefore, authorized and commanded Jewish parents to do for their children is precisely what the opposers of infant baptism say Christian parents have no right to do for their children; and they found their objection on the very nature of the thing to be done—that is, they pronounce that to be wrong which *God* enjoined as *right*. Then, though we do not require from infants exercises of grace which their tender years render impossible in them, we do not look upon these children of believers as children of wrath even as others. Charnock says, ‘Baptism supposes faith in the adult, and in the parent the promise of faith

for the child.'<sup>1</sup> And Dr. Watts says, 'In my opinion, so far as infants are in any way members of the visible Church, it is upon the supposition of their being, with their parents, members of the invisible Church of God.' Our standards set forth nothing less than this; they direct our baptized children to be taught and trained to believe, feel, act and live as becomes those who are the Lord's—not merely that it is wrong and perilous to be and do otherwise, which is true of all whether within or without the Church, but that such a course is inconsistent with their *position as members of the Church*, placed in it by the mercy of God and bound to his service by vows made for them by their parents, whose duty and privilege it was thus to act for them and give them a place among the people of God until they become competent in their own persons, and of their own choice, either to retain or renounce it. Thus this which you pronounce *high-handed rebellion* against the Son of God we believe to be *a religious duty commanded by God*. Have charity enough, then, to admit this as *our position*, and do not judge so harshly of our practice as viewed merely from your own standpoint."

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," Jan., 1857.

“Nay, I will even go further,” said Mr. Courtney. “I said the baptism of an infant is a sin—an act of high-handed rebellion against God. I will now say even more than this: infant baptism is impious; it is an act of sacrilege.”<sup>1</sup>

“That calls for no reply,” said Dr. Graham. “I can only say that I pity the man who can hold such a sentiment in his heart, and still more the one who is so intolerant of the opinions of others as to proclaim it.”

“I still hold to my statement, however,” persisted Mr. Courtney. “If God has not commanded or authorized infant baptism, then to perform it as an ordinance of his religion, in his name and by his professed authority, is an act of impious sacrilege. It can be nothing less. I know your preachers do not so intend it; I know that they would shudder at the very thought. They verily believe that they have the authority. They do it ignorantly, as Paul persecuted the Church. But though their ignorance may, in a degree, excuse their conduct, it does not change the nature of the act. And for one who has studied the subject, who has looked for the authority and failed to find it, in the name of God

<sup>1</sup> “Theodosia Ernest,” p. 323.



to do what God has not required, must require a degree of temerity which I trust few of the professed ministers of Christ possess.”<sup>1</sup>

A smile of rare brightness lighted up Dr. Graham's noble countenance. “Since we are so ignorant, Mr. Courtney,” he said, “we surely do not deserve such a severe sentence.”

“It seems to me that you keep setting up a man of straw for the pleasure of knocking him down, Mr. Courtney,” said Theodore. “You say ‘if God has not commanded or authorized.’ Put it the other way. If God has commanded and authorized, how then?”

Grace gave him a glance of mingled reproof and entreaty which checked his further speech, while Mr. Courtney replied, with some temper,

“I regard it as a fixed fact that there is no such commandment or authority.”

“Yes, but your regarding it as a fact does not make it a fact,” said Dr. Graham. “Consider, my dear sir, that the great mass of professing Christians do now hold that believers are entitled to this ordinance for themselves and for their children. Consider that they claim Scripture authority for this belief. Consider that among them are

<sup>1</sup>“Theodosia Ernest,” p. 324.

many men of the highest intelligence and culture, as well as eminent piety, who have made the study of the Bible their life-work. Consider that they have all the helps given in ancient and modern literature to assist them in this study, and that the Bible itself is in their hands. Consider that but one sect opposes them in their interpretation of its teachings in regard to infant baptism, and say is it not just *barely possible that you may be mistaken*, rather than that these are woefully ignorant or willfully pervert the truth?"

Mr. Percy, who had carefully weighed all that had been said, now interposed: "Let the Scripture argument go, since we cannot see these things from the same point of view, and let us take a plain, practical, common-sense look at this custom of infant baptism. You do not believe that all infants who are baptized are regenerate, do you?"

"No," said Dr. Graham, "I do not. No doctrine can be more opposed to the spirit and teaching of the New Testament than this doctrine of baptismal regeneration, and this is fully recognized in the standards of the Reformed Churches. In the Belgian confession it is said that what circumcision did for the Jewish people, the same baptism does for the children of believers. This of course

precludes the idea of baptismal regeneration. The Heidelberg Catechism says that inasmuch as children no less than adults pertain to the covenant and the Church, they are to be ingrafted into the Church by baptism and separated from the children of unbelievers, as under the Old Testament was done by circumcision, in the place of which baptism is now substituted. The Westminster Confession of Faith says: "Grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it as that no person can be regenerated or saved without it, or that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated." But it is useless to multiply citations. If any fact in doctrinal history is plain, it is that the Reformed Church rejected the doctrine of sacramental grace—*i. e.*, that the sacraments have inherent efficacy and confer grace on all who receive them, provided they do not resist."

"Yet there are members of the Reformed Churches who will tell you that baptism is regeneration," said Mr. Percy, thoughtfully.

"Well," said Dr. Graham, smiling, "this is, after all, a question of fact.<sup>1</sup> If a man should say that pouring water on tombstones would bring the

<sup>1</sup>"Princeton Review," April, 1858.

dead to life, the shortest way of deciding the matter would be to try the experiment. If the operation were repeated thousands, and even millions, of times without success, it would be irrational to believe the theory. It would not do to say that although there were no signs of restored life, still the life was there. Life cannot fail to manifest itself; or even if the signs of life were doubtful, the signs of death are certain. If all the evidences of death remain, notwithstanding these monumental ablutions, it would be absurd to believe that the dead were alive. No less decisive is the evidence of fact against the doctrine of baptismal regeneration."

"What did you mean, then," said Mr. Percy, "when you stated, in the language of Dr. Watts, 'that, so far as infants are in any way members of the visible Church, it is upon the supposition of their being members of the invisible Church of God'? Is not that to assert in plain terms that they are regenerate?"

"Not so," replied Dr. Graham. "The invisible Church, as I was taught in my childhood, consists of the *whole number of the elect* that have been, are or shall be gathered into one under Christ the Head thereof. It includes, therefore, probably,

millions of the unborn and millions of those as yet unconverted. Consequently, presumptive membership in the invisible Church is no presumption of a present vital union with Christ or regeneration by the Holy Ghost. Consequently, again, making this presumptive membership in the invisible Church to depend on natural birth is not to make natural generation a channel of grace. The simple doctrine is that since the promise is not only to parents but their seed, children are, by the command of God, to be regarded and treated as of the number of the elect until they give undeniable evidence to the contrary or refuse to be so considered. It is not their vital union with Christ, nor their actual regeneration by the Holy Ghost, that is presumed, but *their election*. This is no more than is done when we baptize an adult or when he is received to the Lord's table. We presume that he is one of the elect. Whether he is so or not we cannot tell; but he belongs to the class which, by the command of Christ, we are required so to regard and treat. The infant children of believing parents belong to the same general class. This presumption of election is not founded on their baptism, but their baptism is founded on this presumption; just as the presumption that Jewish

children would take Jehovah to be their God was not founded on their circumcision, but their circumcision was founded on that presumption. This point is very clearly defined in my own mind. I trust I have been able to make it clear to you."

"You have," said Mr. Percy, with evident candor; "yet if baptism does not effect the regeneration of infants, and if it does not imply in their case, as in the case of an adult, the exercises of faith and repentance and remission of sins, does it not strike you that, after all, it is a *useless* ceremony, that might as well be omitted? What possible good is effected by it?"

"The answer is plain," said Dr. Graham. "When Paul had proved to the Jews that circumcision could not save them, that it was neither designed as the means of effecting the circumcision of the heart, nor so interested them in the promises made to their fathers as to render their salvation certain, they ungratefully and unreasonably asked, 'What, then, is the profit of circumcision? We may as well neglect it as not if it does not secure us an interest in the Messiah's kingdom.' These are precisely the question and complaint addressed to those who deny that baptism is the means of regeneration, and who teach

that it does not secure, as a matter of course, a portion in the salvation of the gospel. What advantage hath the seed of the pious, and what profit is there in his baptism? Much every way—not to those who pervert it, who take the rite without the substance or mistake the rite for the substance, but to those who justly apprehend it, and in proportion as they so apprehend believe and do.”

“But tell me some one benefit resulting from it,” said Mr. Percy. “Do not deal so much in general statements.”

“Well,” said Dr. Graham, “one very sensible benefit resulting from it is that it has a powerful influence in promoting family religion. While a parent may feel a natural prompting to attend to the spiritual training of his children without it, where a covenant obligation is superadded there is an augmented motive to faithfulness. Thus it will be more certain that he will train his children up to fear God and to keep his commandments. Then the very act of presenting their children to God in a public and solemn manner must have a powerful and happy influence upon the hearts of the parents, and upon their lives also. Moreover, in this act of baptism the parent acknowledges

his child's need of sanctifying grace and his utter dependence upon God for the same. He also lays firm hold of God's covenant and claims the divine promises of grace for his child. He also acknowledges for himself that without God he can do nothing, and that he must have God's help in the rightful training of his child. Is all this nothing? And will God refuse to regard it with favor?"

"Yes, but this all seems to speak only of blessings for the parents," said Mr. Percy. "What particular blessing can come to the child through this ordinance that could not as well be secured to it without it?"

"I reply that this ordinance brings the child into connection with the visible Church,"<sup>1</sup> said Dr. Graham, "puts it under the care of God's people, and bids it walk according to the tenor of her teaching. It brings the Church into visible connection with the child. She adopts it into her family and assumes a solemn obligation to watch over it, and by every possible influence to help it forward to usefulness and to heaven. It brings Jehovah into covenant with his people and his Church, according to which he engages to be

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," Oct., 1861.



their God and the God of their seed after them. These are its direct practical bearings, so far as the children are concerned. They are brought into the kingdom here that they may grow up under its laws, familiar with its doctrines and usages, acknowledging its Head, advancing its interests, and finally may be transplanted into the enclosure on high. Is all this nothing?"

"Nothing unless they are converted," said Mr. Courtney.

"True, and all things are possible with God," said Dr. Graham; "he can and does sometimes save men without any visible instrumentality but his written word.<sup>1</sup> But is this his ordinary way? Or, as man is constituted, is it likely to be the most effective way? No; faith cometh by hearing, and it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For he works in conformity to the laws of man's active and moral powers. So, in reference to the children of the covenant, his way is the best and most successful way, whether we can perceive the reason for it or not. But is it difficult to see this? Is not the effect of fixing their place and lot and sympathies and associations with the world at the outset to

<sup>1</sup> "Princeton Review," Jan., 1857.

give the world the advantage of a prior possession and use, of first moulding their tastes, attachments and habits so that the hindrances to their embracing Christ are augmented beyond measure? Does not the attitude in which one is placed have much to do in deciding what can be made of him? In all its bearings upon the kind of training which will be given to a child, and the effect which that training will have upon him, is there not a heaven-wide difference between the question whether he shall apostatize from the Church, in which he was born and reared, to the world, from which he was taken by the mercy of God while yet a babe, or whether he shall renounce the world, with all its associations, to which he has been wedded by a life-long habit and association, to take his place in the Church? These and similar questions speak their own answer in the light of reason, of experience and the word of God. It was no irrational fear of the two tribes and a half when they were afraid that the children of the tribes over Jordan should cause their own children to cease from fearing the Lord by treating them as if they had 'no part in the Lord.' " ( Josh. xxii. 24, 25. )

" Yet the child, to be accepted of God in heaven, must be born again," said Mr. Percy, gently.

“Yes,” said Dr. Graham, “of that there is no doubt. But correct habits of soul in regard to spiritual and divine things are precisely what is wrought in it by regeneration.<sup>1</sup> For this no outward culture or human training is a substitute. But as the Spirit operates not in defiance or suspension of the laws and activities of our rational and moral nature, not in contravention of, but in giving due efficacy to, outward motives and means, and as God’s promise is annexed to faithful training, so, where this is faithfully, discreetly and prayerfully given, we have reason to hope and believe that the invisible working of the Spirit will silently mingle with and interpenetrate it, and make it not in vain in the Lord.”

“But may not the training be blessed without baptism?” said Mr. Percy.

“It may be, but there is not the same ground for hope in the parent that it will be,” said Dr. Graham. “God’s covenant can never be meaningless; it must convey *certain* and *special* privileges, whether we recognize them or not. He having ordained that the children who are his rightful heritage should be signed and sealed as his, I would not dare to take upon myself the re-

<sup>1</sup>“Princeton Review,” Jan., 1857.

sponsibility of casting forth my children unsigned and unsealed, to be classed and to class themselves with those who have no part in the Lord."

In the earnestness of the discussion Mr. Percy had risen, and had planted himself in a favorite attitude of his, in front of the fire with his hands behind him. Grace had deposited her baby in his pretty swinging cradle, where he lay hushed in sleep, all unconscious of the momentous interests which were involved for him in the hum of voices which had proved his lullaby. Theodosia had drawn her daughter's head to its old resting place upon her lap and silently stroked her waving hair as she listened, and Grace had so long remained utterly quiet and motionless that any one might have imagined that she had fallen asleep.

But at this juncture there was a sudden interruption and diversion of thought in those who had been so calmly carrying on this theological discussion; for the young mother sprang to her feet and cast herself into her father's arms, crying, in an excited manner,

"Oh, say no more, for I have quite decided. I must and will have my baby baptized. My whole heart tells me that it is *right*—that I am *bound* to

do it. I believe that every word Dr. Graham has spoken about it is true. I have thought over it and prayed over it, and the more I thought, the more I prayed, the more clearly I felt that it was true. He *must have the sign of God's covenant upon him!* My baby! MY PRECIOUS LITTLE BABY!"

She broke down here, and lay sobbing upon her father's breast.

Such an outburst of feeling from the quiet Grace took them all by surprise. There was a moment in which no one moved or spoke. Then there were suspicious signs that this emotion was contagious. Theodore walked to the window and looked out, Theodosia silently held her handkerchief to her eyes, and Dr. Graham cleared his throat once or twice.

Mr. Percy began to tremble. He put his arm affectionately around his child and said tenderly,

"Why, my dear, what is it all about? Calm yourself. Of course you will do as you deem right. No one would prevent your so doing."

"And you will not be hurt, dear father?" said Grace, raising her head and looking eagerly into his face. "You will not be vexed? I *must do my duty*, but it breaks my heart to grieve you."

"Nay, my child, I seek not to constrain your conscience," said Mr. Percy. "You and Theodore must act according to your own light with regard to your own child. To your own Master you must stand or fall."

"Surely, surely, you will not do so wickedly as to encourage your daughter in an act of such presumption, such disobedience?" exclaimed Mr. Courtney, in a tone of repressed excitement.

"You perceive how it is," said Mr. Percy. "She has a clear conviction of duty in this matter. I do not see the thing as she does, but—"

"But you give way to a few womanish tears," said Mr. Courtney. "You give up your principles, you deny your faith."

"Not so," said Mr. Percy. "I only feel that I cannot deny my daughter's right to be guided by her own conscience. She and her husband are parents now, and with them the matter must rest."

"Mr. Percy, you are no Baptist, and I tell you so to your face," cried Mr. Courtney, giving way to the angry excitement which filled his breast. "You either are no Baptist or that daughter of yours is a snare to your soul."

He rushed from the room, and closed the door after him with a violence which seemed to shake

the house. Theodore turned from the window and recovered himself.

"A good riddance!" he said. "Impertinent fellow! He thrust himself into a discussion which did not in the least concern him, and has been so arrogant, so insufferably narrow-minded, throughout that I am disgusted with him."

"Let us not forget to exercise the grace of Christian charity, my young friend," said Dr. Graham, soothingly. "Mr. Courtney is a good man and means well. We may let him have the full benefit of the excuse which he is so willing to award to Presbyterian doctors of divinity. I think he sins 'through ignorance,' and veritably believes he is doing God service in misrepresenting and vilifying the practices of the *main body* of the Christian Church."

"Well, let him pass," said Theodore. "He is not of much account to us just now in any way. My wife seems to have settled it about the baby, leaving me no voice in the matter. When had we better present him in the church for baptism?"

"The sooner the better," said Dr. Graham. "Say on Sunday next."

"Agreed," said Theodore.

"Then I will say good-night," said Dr. Gra-

ham. "I fear I have so wearied you all that you will exclaim 'Good riddance!' at my departure as well as at that of my unfortunate opponent."

"No fear of that," said Theodore as he accompanied his friend into the hall.

As the door closed upon them Mr. Percy said gently, "Well, Grace, it is all settled now. Are you any happier? Are you satisfied?"

Grace answered with her most radiant smile :

"Yes, father; I am fully and entirely satisfied."







## CHAPTER V.

### *THE BABY'S BAPTISM.—PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.*

**T**HE young mother arrayed her beautiful babe in the baptismal robe with a tender smile upon her face. It was a costly robe of the finest texture, of the purest white. The elaborate embroidery, which had not been spared, was edged with real thread-lace. There was a tiny gold chain for the baby's neck. There were golden links for the baby's sleeves. Nothing which wealth could secure had been spared.

"Vanity of vanities!" said Theodosia, coming suddenly into the room. "Will your child be any more acceptable to God for this outward show, Grace? But perhaps it is as well to be consistent. In a rite which is in itself a mere form attention to forms should be carefully observed."

There was a ring of sarcasm in her mother's tone which struck Grace painfully. She looked

up hastily and her sensitive lips quivered, while her eyes filled with tears.

"Oh, mother," she said, "do not disturb my peace to-day. It is such an eventful day to me. I want to have no cloud upon it when memory brings it up to me, as it will in all the after years."

Theodosia instantly repented of her words, for she had a tender heart.

"Not for the world would I mar your peace, my child," she said. "Yet I would warn you of a danger. Is there not a little vanity lurking in your breast which prompts you to make your baby so very fine as you carry him into the church before the great congregation?"

"I was not thinking much about the congregation, I believe," said Grace, gently. "I was thinking rather of Christ the Lord. In the days of old, you know, the people of God brought their most precious gifts to lay upon the altar. Baby is the most precious thing that all the world contains for me. I want to array him so that he may be at his very best when I consecrate him to God in a living faith."

Theodosia was struck with the spiritual light which illumined her daughter's face. Baptist

though she was, of the strictest immersionist doctrine, determined though she was that every infant child should hold its place outside of the fold till death or advancing years should release it from so perilous a position, she was awed and impressed.

It was with a very different tone that she said, "Grace, I never can quite understand you. Was that the thought which made you look so proud and happy as I came into the room?"

"Not exactly that," said Grace, blushing. "As I threw this dress, which I have prepared with so much care, over baby's head, I breathed a prayer that just so the robe of Christ's righteousness, purchased for sinners at such a cost, might cover my baby's soul, hiding its imperfections and making it an acceptable gift to the pure and holy God."

Theodosia was completely overcome by these words, and by the look and tone with which they were uttered. She turned and left the room as hastily as she had entered it. She met Mr. Percy in the hall, and he at once noticed the disturbance of her manner.

"What is it, my dear?" he said. "Is anything the matter with Grace?"

"Yes," said Theodosia, in the quick, impulsive

way which had once been habitual to her. "I am afraid that Grace is too good to live. It seems as if her ways were not our ways, nor her thoughts our thoughts. More than any one I ever knew she has the spiritual mind. Her religion seems her very life."

"It is fortunate for her if it is so," said Mr. Percy, gravely. "No one so keenly enjoys religion as the person to whom it is a constant, living experience."

"I know it," said his wife; "but when people get quite above the world, they are very apt to be taken out of it."

"Do not be alarmed," said Mr. Percy, smiling. "I have heard many a fond mother express anxiety lest some cherished child should prove too good to live, yet in most cases the child survived. As far as my own experience and observation go, I should say that extreme goodness is rather an uncommon complaint. Very few die of it."

It was quite an interesting sight that was witnessed in the church that day. Several other parents brought their children, and many of the older members of the congregation wept as Dr. Graham pronounced the solemn words of the service which brought the little ones within the pale

of Christ's visible Church. Untried souls, unfolding in a world of sin, what so fitting as that the Church of God should throw about them the arms of her protecting love? Heirs of eternal life, through the merits of that blood which has been so freely poured out in atonement for the whole human race, what so fitting as that the seal of their adoption should be thus placed upon them?

Many were the prayers that were especially offered up for them that day—prayers that God would accept and defend these little ones, give to them his Holy Spirit and keep them from the evil. Were those prayers of God's own people of no avail? Did God, the ever-living and true God, turn to them a deaf ear in contradiction of all his promises to his people? Believe it who can!

Even Theodosia felt her soul deeply stirred as she bowed her head and lifted up her heart with the rest, while Mr. Percy dashed away some tears that did not in the least disgrace his manhood, although they might have been frowned upon by his Baptist brethren.

"I declare I am almost tempted to believe in it," said Theodosia, in a whisper, as she put her hand upon her husband's arm in their homeward

walk. "This rite of infant baptism never before seemed to me so sweetly significant."

"My dear, stop just there," said Mr. Percy. "Do not yield another inch in this direction even in your thoughts. It was bad enough to be compelled to give in as we did about *baptizo*;<sup>1</sup> but if we begin to make concessions about infant baptism, we are lost. We shall end in being no Baptists at all."

As the evening hours came on Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt were enjoying their usual Sunday evening tête-à-tête, for the presence of baby in his pretty basket cradle was hardly suggestive of a third person in the room. Grace reclined upon the sofa with her eyes closed and a look of great content on her beautiful face. She was slightly paler than usual, for the events of day had both excited and agitated her, and she was never very strong. Yet even in her weariness she had a restful look which made her husband love to look upon her. More to hear her lips confirm what her face so plainly told him than from any need of such an assurance he said,

"Well, Grace, my darling wife, the great transaction is done. Are you satisfied?"

<sup>1</sup> See "Theodore," published by the Presbyterian Board of Publication.

"More than satisfied," said Grace. "It seems as if a great burden of responsibility had been lifted off my soul in this giving our baby publicly to God."

"Does it?" said Theodore, in a tone of some surprise. "Now, do you know that with me it is just the reverse. I feel that I have assumed a new responsibility; I hope I shall never forget it or lose sight of it. I must now fulfill my pledge, given to God in the presence of many witnesses, to train up this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

"Yes," said Grace, "but I have always felt that in giving me this child God fixed upon me this obligation to train it up for him. And often, in thinking it over, when I realized how temptations which I could not even estimate must come, and when I knew that the heart of sin in this child of my love would strongly incline him to yield to these temptations, I have been troubled and anxious. Now I feel as if God had assumed this responsibility for me. The child has been given to him, sealed with the token of his covenant. I can give up my care about it as I do all other cares. I trust it to his covenant love as I trust my own soul, and look to him in faith for

the child's salvation in Christ even as I do for my own salvation."

Just then there was a step in the hall and a tap at the door.

"Come in!" cried Theodore, while Grace abandoned her recumbent position and smoothed her somewhat disordered hair.

"It is not in order for me to call to-night, I suppose," said Dr. Graham as he entered, "but I felt so strong a desire to look in upon you that I could not resist the temptation."

"You are always welcome, sir," said Theodore, warmly.

"And how is my little man?" said Dr. Graham, going to the cradle and looking down upon the sleeping child. "I feel that I have a sort of claim upon him now. If you do not do your full duty by him, you may expect to hear from me; and if I ever see him going wrong, I shall strive with all my might to set him right. You may be sure of that."

"I hope you will," said Grace, with sudden animation. "I dearly love my boy, but I think I would far rather have him die than have him grow up to be a wicked man."

"Yes; those who die in infancy are for ever safe;



there is comfort in that thought," said Dr. Graham, thinking of his own loved and lost.

"There is one thing that puzzles me," said Theodore, thoughtfully. "Grace has just been speaking of her child as if it were already saved, but I cannot go so far as that in my faith. I know that the children who have been baptized in infancy are not always saved, by any means. Many of them grow up to lead godless, unprofitable lives, and I cannot account for it."

"I do not know that you are called upon to account for it," said Dr. Graham. "The only thing for us is to do our plain duty, act up to the best light that we have, look to God in faith for his blessing, and then leave results with him."

"Still, it is a matter of wonder to me," said Theodore, thoughtfully, "that the children of good men so often refuse to walk in the steps of their fathers."

"I am inclined to think that where that is the case there is some grand defect in the home training or influence," said Dr. Graham. "Most Christian parents really desire the salvation of their children, yet how few earnestly seek it by every means in their power as the very first object in life! Oh, in the course of my own ministry

among men I have seen great mistakes made, and sometimes the mistakes have resulted in a bitter harvest."

"Please to mention a few of them, sir," said Grace.

"I have seen parents encourage their little ones in the exhibition of willful, wayward tempers for the amusement of the hour," said Dr. Graham. "The saucy, bright, lively baby is charming in his defiance of all rightful authority, but I need hardly tell you that in the rampant school-boy the same mood seems very different. The obedience which at first might have been easily conquered becomes harder to secure with every year of injudicious indulgence."

"Yes," said Theodore; "only last week a friend of mine teased his little two-year-old boy till the child was in a great rage. We all laughed when the little fellow went at his father with a cane and struck him. He looked so manly and so fearless."

"I should not have laughed," said Dr. Graham. "I wonder at such folly, yet we too often see it. Then, to give another case, I often see Christians living consistently themselves, yet allowing their children to run unchecked in a course of utter vanity and worldliness."

"But perhaps the children are vain and worldly," said Grace, "and perhaps their parents are afraid of disgusting them utterly with religion if they force its claims upon them."

"And perhaps the mother takes a secret delight in the triumphs of her fashionable daughter," said Dr. Graham, with a touch of irony. "And perhaps she is so fondly indulgent to her manly boy that she hates to say 'No' to any plan of his. And perhaps the father is so criminally weak that he shares in these feelings. And thus the children are seldom restrained in anything. Are these parents fulfilling the baptismal vow, and can they look assuredly for the salvation of these children through an early self-dedication to God?"

"No," said Theodore. "And yet what would you do? Would you hold the children to the same rules of living that bind the parents?"

"I would," said Dr. Graham. "Whilst considerate of the indiscretion of youth, if my child chose wilfully to break through the rules of strict Christian living, it should be after he had passed beyond the bounds of my authority. To the full extent of our influence and power over the children whom God has given us are we responsible for them to him."

"Have you noticed any other grand defects in parental training, sir?" said Grace.

"Yes, too many to mention," said Dr. Graham. "In some cases parents, by all the force of example and influence, are teaching the little ones that *money* is the great good to be sought. Money, the distinctions which money can secure, the indulgences which money can buy,—these are ever held up before the mind as the chief object of desire. What wonder that the little ones take so kindly to this teaching that godliness is hardly ever thought about? Then there are other evils—the placing of children at schools good for intellectual training, but wholly destitute of proper religious influences, the sending of young men into positions of great trial and temptation in order to secure some worldly advantage, the wealthy marriage, planned and chosen without any regard to its influence on the religious life. Oh, I cannot speak of half that I have seen. You, who are Christian parents, if you would train this soul for Jesus, must ever be jealously on the watch for opportunities to guide it in the right direction, ever on guard against the counter-currents that may turn it aside. And you must be constant and earnest in prayer."

"I will," said Grace, earnestly. "One of my greatest joys in looking forward to my baby's future has been in the thought that he would be able to do more for my Master than I could ever hope to do. He *must* be a Christian. I could not bear it if my baby should ever be a rebel against my Lord."

Theodore felt rebuked as he listened. His day-dreams of his son's future had been of a very different character.

Dr. Graham soon left them, and Theodore, in the course of his business thoughts, very soon allowed much of that which had been said to slip from his memory, but Grace kept all the good minister's teachings in her heart.





## CHAPTER VI.

### *DIFFERENCES.*

**G**RACE WESTERVELT," said Josie Eldredge, "I truly think you are the happiest woman in the world."

Grace looked up from her sewing and smiled.

"I am very happy," she said—"that I will not deny; but perhaps many others are just as happy."

"Hypocrite!" said Josie. "You know you do not think so; and that modest little disclaimer is but a pretence to draw me on. You want me to say, what I have said so many times before, that your home is about perfect in all its appointments, that Theodore is splendid, and that baby excels all other babies in everything that can make a baby attractive. Look at him now. Did you ever see a prettier picture?"

Josie had brought her sewing and was spending

the morning with Grace; and as it happened to be one of nurse's busy days, the two friends had taken their place in the nursery that they might take charge of the baby as they worked.

The little Arthur Westervelt had now nearly reached the age of two years, and was, as Josie had said, the very perfection of a baby. As Grace turned to look at him he was in the midst of a grand frolic with his aunt Lena, who was his favorite playmate and companion. Lena, on her part, was perfectly devoted to her young nephew, and was almost ready to make a martyr of herself for his sake. Not only did she humor all his whims and exhaust her ingenuity in efforts to amuse him, but her prettiest toys were freely placed at his disposal, and in her eyes the little Arthur could do no wrong.

This feeling was shared, in a greater or less degree, by every one of Lena's brothers. Of course this was very gratifying to Grace, but it was beginning to cause her some apprehension lest among them all her baby should be spoiled. Even now, as her eye rested on the picture to which Josie had attracted her attention, she saw something which did not quite please her. For as Lena kneeled upon the floor to build a block

house for her baby-nephew to knock over, that young gentleman had managed to grasp her hair with both hands, and was pulling it most unmercifully. Lena bore it bravely, but there were tears in her eyes as she gently tried to extricate herself.

"Arthur," cried Grace, "you hurt poor Lena. Let go! You must not pull her hair so. Let go this moment!"

The baby turned his great eyes upon his mother in indignant surprise. Then he tightened his grasp as he said, solemnly,

"Mamma, I won't!"

"There is dignity for you!" cried Josie, in a burst of laughter. "He is not going to be put down. What a little man he is! Did you ever see him look so cunning?"

Lena laughed, too, in spite of her pain. But Grace went to the little rebel and said in a tone of grave displeasure,

"It is naughty to say 'I won't' to mamma." She then took hold of the tightly-clasped hands and tried to undo them as she repeated her command. But Master Arthur grew angry now, and held on with all his might. Then Grace struck the little hands once, twice, thrice. At the third blow



the firm, defiant look began to die out of the baby's face, the pretty mouth quivered, and then, with a sudden plunge backward, Master Arthur began to kick and to scream with all his might.

"Poor little fellow!" said Josie, pityingly; "I am afraid he has hurt his head."

"Darling baby!" cried Lena as she bent tenderly over him. "He did not mean any harm. He does not know how it hurts to pull hair."

But the baby refused to be comforted. In the midst of his sobs and cries his eyes were ever fixed upon his mother's face, as though he knew his power over her and had determined to conquer her. Every cry went straight to that gentle, loving heart, but Grace did not yield to the feeling that tempted her to take the child and soothe him. She touched the bell; and when nurse appeared, she said,

"Nurse, you must take the baby away and keep him till he is good. I think it is about time for him to take his nap."

"I want mamma! I want mamma!" screamed Arthur.

"Mamma cannot take you now," said Grace. "When you are a good boy and will mind, then mamma will take you."

Nurse raised the screaming boy in her strong arms, in spite of his struggles and cries, and carried him out of the room.

"I declare, Grace," said Josie, impatiently, "if I had not seen it, I never would have believed you were so hard-hearted."

"I think it was too bad, sister," sobbed Lena. "To speak so sternly to the little darling, and to strike his pretty little dimpled hands! Oh, how could you do it? How could you do it?"

Grace drew the grieving child to her arms and gently arranged her disordered hair.

"You do not understand as well as you will by and by, dear Lena," she said. "It does not do to give a baby his own way in everything. It does not do to let him be naughty."

"But Arthur is so little," pleaded Lena. "He does not even know what naughty is."

"Yes, that is my opinion exactly," said Josie. "And how any one can resist such a little beauty is a mystery to me. Why, I would let him have his own way in everything, if it were only for the sake of his eyes."

"He is old enough to learn to obey and to control his temper," said Grace. "Surely, you will admit that the earlier he can learn these les-

sons, the better it will be for him and for all who love him."

"Stuff and nonsense!" said Josie. "It is one of the rights of babyhood to be willful and unreasonable. The time for training and all that comes soon enough. Do just get rid of that fanciful conscience, Grace, and take the comfort of petting and spoiling your baby to your heart's content. There will be plenty of time for government and discipline when he grows older, and when you cannot help yourself."

"You do not understand," said Grace. "I love my baby too well to spoil him. I want him to be good; and how can he be good if I do not teach him aright?"

"Do you suppose he will be any better for that little struggle which took place here just now?" said Josie, incredulously. "Take my word for it, he did not understand it in the least. He only thought his mamma a cross, hard, unfeeling woman, and his little heart was almost broken."

But Josie changed her mind about an hour later when the nurse brought her young charge in fresh from his nap. As Grace took him in her arms he held up his rosebud of a mouth for a kiss. And as Grace gave the kiss, he said, smiling,

“Arthur good now; Arthur not say ‘I won’t’ to mamma any more.”

And when Lena came to him, and began to play with him after the old fashion, he only patted and stroked her long silky hair, and never once offered to pull it. After all hands had bowed down to the young king, and had tempted him to exhibit all his pretty baby graces, nurse came in to announce that she was ready to take him out for an airing. Lena at once pleaded to be allowed to help draw the carriage, and nurse gladly consented.

As soon as the customary wraps had been put on and the children had been caressed and dismissed, Josie threw herself on the floor at her friend’s feet and buried her face in her lap.

“Pet me and stroke my hair as you used to do, Grace,” she said. “I long so much for your love to-day. I sometimes feel as if with all these new joys you have no place left in your heart for me.”

Her voice died away in a little sob. Grace at once threw aside her work and tried to raise the drooping face.

“Why, Josie,” she said, “I should not know you to-day. What has come over you, dear?”

You know that I love you, and that I take the deepest interest in all that concerns you."

"Oh yes, so you say," cried Josie, glancing brightly up and smiling through her tears. "Yet you have never even noticed *this*."

She held up her hand a moment, and as suddenly lowered it, but not before Grace's eye had caught the flash of a diamond that had not been wont to rest there.

"Josie!" cried Grace, in a sudden excitement. "You do not mean—"

"Yes, I do mean that I am engaged to be married," said Josie, with a saucy smile and a very brilliant blush. "And you, my most intimate friend, have never even suspected my secret."

"It is unpardonable that I should have been so absorbed in my home interests as to be so unmindful of you," said Grace. "But I am very anxious to know more now. So come, Josie, tell me all about it."

Josie, without more urging, told the whole story of her love.

"I have wanted to tell you, Grace," she said, "for I have had such a longing for sympathy. It seems to me that I never felt the need of a mother's love as I do now."

Grace freely sympathized with her friend in all her longings for affection, in all her romantic dreams of her new life. But when at length Josie whispered a name, she started and drew back.

"Not Mr. Clavering?" she said. "Not Mr. Walter Clavering?"

"Yes," said Josie, "Mr. Walter Clavering. I do not wonder that you are surprised. He is so respected, he has such a high position, that I do not see how he can care for a girl like me. And then he is very wealthy, I believe. That would not weigh with me in the least, but it pleases my father greatly. He says that his note is as good as any on Wall street."

"But, Josie," said Grace, in a tone of dismay, "he is so worldly. He does not even profess to be a Christian."

"Yes, I know," said Josie, with a little sigh. "I am sorry about that, but it cannot be helped. He says he admires religion in a woman, although he does not care for it himself. And he promises never to interfere with me. He says I shall go to church and teach in the Sunday-school just as I do now—that he will never be any hindrance."

"But how can he help being a hindrance if he throws all the influence of his own life against

you?" said Grace. "Oh, my dear Josie, I wish your happiness with all my heart, but I fear—"

"Do not fear for me," said Josie. "I am proud to be the choice of a man like Mr. Clavering. I honor, I respect, I love him. I am sorry that he is not a Christian, but that may be got over. Perhaps I may convert him."

"Perhaps you may," said Grace, doubtfully. "You will have to be doubly watchful, doubly careful, if you feel that perhaps the salvation of your dearest friend depends upon your faithfulness."

"Yes, yes, I know," said Josie. "Of course I mean to try my very best, and I shall be happy—I know I shall. Congratulate me, darling. Tell me that you are glad for and with me."

But Grace did not do that. She could not say that she was glad, although she was very loving to Josie and tried to enter heartily into all her plans. Even now it was evident that these friends had drifted apart since that day when they stood together before the altar and took their baptismal vows. It is hard to say, perhaps, where the point of departure lay.

Grace had given herself up to God in entire consecration, and her Christian life had been from

its very beginning a patient, consistent walk with God. Every morning her first prayer had been, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" every day her constant effort had been to do the service which seemed to be required of her, looking unto Jesus for help and strength.

Then the outward circumstances of her life had been such as to aid rather than to hinder her. Theodore was a Christian, although not so spiritually-minded as Grace. He owed much to her clear, childlike faith, but his strength and earnestness also gave great support to her more timid and self-distrustful disposition. Thus the two, in true Christian union of heart and purpose, were daily growing in grace and making progress in the heavenly life. When the baby-boy came, he proved a new incentive to watchfulness and prayer, especially since they had been led to enter into such holy covenant relations with God in his behalf.

So, in her sheltered home, with its beautiful and loving associations, the newly-implemented principle was nourished in the heart of Grace. Under circumstances which seemed all favorable to its development, the tender plant thrived and grew, strengthened its roots, threw out its delicate ten-



drills, and unfolded its buds and blossoms in new beauty. Her religion became her very life. No pleasure, no interest, could charm her apart from it, while every joy gained brightness and beauty from this central joy, which ever diffused its radiance even upon the most common duties and pursuits.

Grace was herself the only one who did not see the beauty and sweetness of her character as it fed thus upon the heavenly manna. She was conscious of so much weakness, so much imperfection, of such easily-besetting sins, that, except in her growing peace and joy, she did not realize the progress she had made.

She often said that it was all owing to the goodness of God in shielding her from temptation that she was so seldom betrayed into glaring inconsistencies. "He has so placed me," she added, with a smile, "that I have nothing to contend with but the sinfulness of my own heart. Perhaps he knows that I have not so much strength to resist as some have, and so shelters me. He never tries any of his children beyond their ability to bear."

With Josie it had been very different. With no mother, and a father who was decidedly worldly

in many of his ways, although he was a professing Christian, she had no sources of help in the influences of her home. Then she was young, beautiful, very fond of amusement, high-spirited and an heiress. Surely this young girl held a very exposed position, and with her it must have been a constant struggle to lead the Christian life. She began with great zeal. In the first fervor of her new hopes she gave up everything which did not seem to have a direct bearing upon religion. Not only worldly and hurtful amusements, but all the innocent pleasures which had hitherto served as relaxations to her mind, were freely and fully renounced. Then there was a constant round of self-imposed duties to occupy the time, which would otherwise have hung heavily.

Friends remonstrated; fashionable acquaintances ridiculed her unmercifully. Even Mrs. Percy and Grace urged moderation. But Josie stood firm. "She was determined," she said, "never to be a sort of half Christian." She even talked regretfully of the fact that there was no Protestant convent of just the right description for her, and she spent much of her leisure-time in wishing that she could go on a mission. "If it were not for my father," she said, "I would do

it in a moment. But he is so dependent upon me that I cannot make up my mind to leave him."

Mr. Eldredge alone offered no word of opposition to this effervescence of religious zeal. On the contrary, he told Josie to do exactly as she chose, that her time was her own, and that all he cared for was to see her happy in her own way. When Mr. Percy told him that he was really fearful that Josie would injure her health with such a constant strain upon her energies, he only laughed.

"Let Josie alone," he said. "She is a good girl, but she is rather apt to run to extremes. She will run her course,—and then look out for the rebound! I know my own daughter. Opposition will only urge her on. Give her full swing, and she will soon tire of all this. Take my word for it."

The event proved that Mr. Eldredge was in the right. Josie did not find the joy in her new life which she had been led to expect. There were good reasons for this. The consciousness that she was doing so much more than others soon awakened a self-righteous spirit in the young Christian. This induced a constant watchfulness of self, rather than the looking to Jesus which is

the only true source of strength. Then the distasteful duties began to seem burdensome, and one by one they were dropped. Then came a strong craving for the old pursuits, the old scenes. At first this was resisted, then little by little it was yielded to, till Josie had drifted back into her old life. Indeed, the restlessness and secret dissatisfaction which she felt, only made her plunge into worldly gayeties more eagerly than she had ever done. Grace remonstrated.

"My dear," said Josie, "I shall never renounce my religion, but I have found out that so long as one lives in the world one must in some degree conform to its ways. My position at the head of my father's house and in society is such that I *must* play my part socially. I cannot be a nun or a saint, and, to tell the truth, I have found out that I have no vocation to be either."

"We are told to be in the world, yet not of the world," said Grace.

"Yes, I know," said Josie, impatiently. "But I have tried all that, and I could not make it go, somehow. I did not feel the sweet peace that Christians talk about. I think I really am in a better frame of mind and love God more now than I did when I was constantly afflicting myself

with over-conscientiousness. My place is in the world—that is evident. I shall try to do as well as I can, but I must have some pleasure.”

“Might there not have been something wrong in your way of trying, Josie?” said Grace, timidly. “I know that we may have peace and joy in religion, for I have felt them. I know too that they are better and sweeter than any pleasures which the world can offer.”

Josie looked at her friend for a moment with a glance that was half searching, half envious.

“I really believe you mean what you say, Grace,” she said. “If any one has a vocation to be a saint, you have. The character seems to suit you better than it does me. You were born to it, and I was not.”

This remark effectually silenced Grace, for it always pained her to be told that she had any goodness in herself, so conscious was she of the many faults which required her constant care.

Thus Josie went on her way unchecked. Her father indulged her; the world flattered her. She was a belle and a beauty, and not a little proud of both characters. She grew worldly and vain, yet she was a Christian. She would not willfully have renounced her religion. She was particular to

keep up the forms of Christian duty. She was regular in her attendance at church, and even taught in the Sabbath-school quite energetically. Many people said and thought that it was very good in one who was so courted and so rich to be so particular about these things. Now, as the end of all this, Josie was to make an ambitious marriage.

That evening Grace did not sing to her child or engage in a frolic with him, as was her usual custom. She merely smiled when Theodore endeavored to entice her into taking a share of the sport, and relapsed into her thoughtful mood.

"Well, little wife," said the young husband when at length the nurse came to claim Master Arthur for the night—"well, little wife, what has gone wrong to-day? Has the baby been naughty? or has the cat upset the cream? Confess, for you are unquestionably out of sorts. That is a fact that cannot be hidden so long as you have such a tell-tale face."

"The baby *has* been naughty," said Grace, smiling, "and I had to punish him; and both Josie and Lena thought I was very cruel for doing it."

"Surely you would not allow that to make you uneasy?" said Theodore. "Master Arthur is old

enough and willful enough to require some training from you, but you must not magnify his faults into serious evils. He will be all right if we only have strength to do our duty by him."

"Yes, I know," said Grace. "When I am tempted to overlook any little display of temper or to encourage it, I think of my baptismal vow, and I dare not. To train up a child for God—that involves so much. I dare not be careless or unfaithful even in little things."

"Take care of the little things, and the great things will take care of themselves," said Theodore. "I have always found that rule to work well in the affairs that I have to attend to, and I doubt not it will apply as well to the training of our young son. If the little failings are carefully looked after and corrected, I do not believe many serious defects will develop themselves."

"But, Theodore, I am not thinking so much of baby just now," said Grace. "I am greatly troubled about Josie Eldredge. She tells me that she is engaged to be married."

Theodore laughed aloud.

"And is that such a misfortune?" he said. "Really, I hardly feel complimented to find that my little wife has such a horror of matrimony

that the mere mention of it as a possibility for her friend has power to give her a fit of the blues."

"If Josie were only going to marry any one like you, I should be very glad, Theodore," said Grace. "But she is to marry a man who is not a Christian at all, and it seems to me that it will be a very bad thing for her."

"That depends," said Theodore. "Josie has a strong character and is not easily governed. It may be that this lover of hers has a respect for religion and will be guided by her. One cannot tell. I think it will be better for our friend to marry. She is so much flattered, and I do not think her present life a healthful one for any woman."

"I have thought so myself," said Grace; "and if she had chosen differently, I would not have one regret. But Mr. Walter Clavering is so set in his own way, and his way is such a wrong one."

"Walter Clavering!" echoed Theodore, in a tone of dismay. "Why, the man is little better than an infidel! I should not think Mr. Eldredge would ever consent to it."

"Josie says her father is very much pleased



about it," said Grace. "Mr. Clavering is so rich and every one thinks so highly of him."

"I cannot understand it," said Theodore. "It will be almost impossible for Josie to hold fast to her Christian integrity under the influence of such a man as Clavering, he is so plausible, so fascinating and so unprincipled."

"Well, it is useless to discuss the matter," said Grace, with a little sigh. "The thing is settled, and we must just make the best of it. We can pray for Josie, and let us never forget to do it. I have great faith in prayer."

"So have I," said Theodore, "and a still greater faith in a prayer-hearing, prayer-answering God. May he give us all grace to keep our baptismal vows in all their integrity!"

"Amen!" said Grace; "and may he grant dear Josie special strength, since she is to have such peculiarly strong counter-influences to contend with!"

"Influences of her own choosing," said Theodore. "How ready we all are to rush into temptation, even while the petition is daily upon our lips, 'Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil'!"



## CHAPTER VII.

### *FIRST GLEANINGS.*

**T**HERE were five of them, and every one said they were fine, promising children. They were certainly well enough as far as looks went—at least so thought the parents, who watched them as, grouped about the large table in the library, they prepared their lessons for the following day.

Arthur, the eldest of the family, was a manly boy of fourteen, growing, so every one said, to be the image of his father. As he bent over his slate, rapidly working out a difficult sum in arithmetic, his lips were firmly compressed, and there was that in his whole attitude and expression which told the story of a resolute will and of concentrated thought.

John, who was about two years younger, was very different both in looks and character. He had his

mother's eyes and complexion, and also her patient, quiet manner. He was preparing a Latin exercise with the greatest care, but without the least appearance of haste or disturbance. Many people said that John ought to have been a girl, he was so gentle and domestic in his ways, and even his father looked upon this second son with a pitying tenderness. But his mother knew him better. She alone appreciated the real strength of his character, his good sense and excellent judgment.

"John is *reliable*," she said. "He never fails me; he never will fail any one who trusts in him. If all my children were like John, the task of training them would be comparatively easy."

Harry, the third boy, was a sunny-tempered, merry-hearted child of eleven, handsome, winning and witty, yet a trial to the nerves and patience of all who knew him. With the best intentions in the world, he was always in trouble. His resolutions were excellent, and were made with the most zealous fervor. The pity of it was that they did not and would not stay in mind long enough to be carried into effect. Easily influenced, easily beguiled, this youthful Harry had already cost his mother many a heartache and his father

many an anxious fear. He was studying a well-thumbed history, and his lips moved very fast as he repeated the verses over and over again; but his dark eyes glanced around the room with a world of mischief in them, and every now and then he indulged himself in a droll contortion of his features for the benefit of his youngest sister, which set that young lady off into a convulsive giggle hard to be controlled.

Mary, aged nine, was a rosy-cheeked girl, with large brown eyes and chestnut curls. Her attention was divided between her brother Harry and a spelling-lesson.

And little Totty, as they all called her, although her real name was Alice, was a fair-haired, blue-eyed fairy of six, very busy, very cunning and very anxious to do as the others did in all things. She had just begun to go to school and had no lessons to prepare, but she insisted upon sitting at the table with the rest, and certainly seemed as busy as any of them. She was drawing some very mysterious characters upon her slate, her head a little on one side, her hair falling back from her face, and the motions of her tongue keeping time to the movements of her pencil.

Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt had a small round

table for their own use on the other side of the room. They had changed somewhat since that day when they carried their first-born child into the church for baptism. Theodore had grown stout and a few silver threads mingled with his dark locks. Grace had lost the freshness and bloom of her beauty, but the expression of her face was even sweeter than it had been in the early days.

Theodore was quietly enjoying his paper, but every now and then his eyes glanced over the top of it at the group of busy children, while a smile played about his mouth which sufficiently betrayed his contentment with the sweet domestic picture.

Grace silently plied her needle, but she, too, noted with deep interest all that took place at the young students' table. She saw much that the father did not seem to notice. She saw that deepening frown upon the brow of Arthur; she saw Harry's little quiet appeal to John for help; and she saw the shrug of the shoulders with which John turned his back upon his brother that he might apply himself the more diligently to his own task.

Children of the covenant, to be trained for

heaven—this was the thought continually present to her mind through all her tender love for them. Now, as often before, a prayer went up from her heart that all these characters might be breathed upon and changed into the image of the Lord. How could the work be accomplished unless it were by the agency of the Holy Spirit? How could Arthur learn to subdue that temper? How could John overcome that selfishness? And Harry—impulsive, unstable Harry—how could he receive the much needed steadfastness, in any other way?

Her heart almost sank within her at times, for she longed to see in these children of her love stronger evidences that they were indeed the children of God. As the prayer still filled her soul the silence was suddenly broken. There was an angry exclamation from Arthur; a book was hurled across the room with great force, and then there was a crash.

“Arthur,” said Mr. Westervelt, in a tone of severe displeasure—“Arthur, I am ashamed of you. These displays of temper are really disgraceful.”

Arthur looked sulky and stubborn as he sat with folded arms and listened to this reproof.

"Oh, my son," said his mother, gently, "I thought we were to have no more of these scenes. I thought you promised me—"

The boy's lips began to quiver.

"I did promise," he said, "but it is all of no use. I get angry, and then I forget everything. That vexatious old sum will never come right; I have tried it three times, and now—"

"And now you are making it impossible for me to attend to my Latin," said John, in a cool, unsympathizing tone.

"Plague take your old Latin!" said Arthur, angrily.

"Take your book, sir, and leave the room!" said his father. "I will not allow this in my presence. Neither will I allow you to disturb your brothers and sisters when they are trying to do their duty."

Arthur caught up his book and slate and went out, banging the door after him.

"Really, this is unbearable!" cried Mr. Westervelt, starting up and dropping his paper. "I will soon put a stop to it, though."

As he advanced toward the door Grace threw herself in his way.

"Let me go to the boy, Theodore," she said

earnestly and pleadingly. "I think I understand him better than you do."

"Much you understand such a temper as that," said her husband, smiling. "However, you may try. If you do not succeed in teaching that unhappy boy to control himself, I must; that is all."

Grace followed her son, but her heart was filled with misgivings as she entered the room which had been appropriated to the use of the two older boys and saw Arthur's hard, defiant face. He did not even look toward her as the door opened, but said, impatiently,

"It is all of no use, mother; I give up trying from this time out. You might as well let me alone. I never could be like John if I should kill myself."

"Tell me what it is that has vexed you so," said his mother, gently, as she took a seat beside him. "I know things cannot have gone well with you at school, or you would not be so easily discouraged."

"You are about right there," said Arthur, in the same hard tone. "Things went about as contrary as they well could. It was enough to put any fellow out. Jack Grimes went above me in the grammar class because he was mean enough



to look into his book and I would not. I tried to have it out with him after school, and the teacher called me to account and said he should give me a bad mark for fighting. And now I cannot get my sums right, so that will take away all my chance for a perfect mark to-morrow. It is enough to make any fellow angry; and I do get angry so easily."

There was a half-stifled sigh as he uttered this least remark which awakened some hope in the mother's breast.

"Arthur," she said, "if you are really sorry for your fault—"

"Oh, I do not know whether I am sorry or not," said the boy, petulantly. "I would like to have been born with a better disposition, but I was not, so what is the use of mourning over it?"

"The use is that you must mourn over it, you must overcome this impatient temper, if you would be a good man," said his mother.

"I do not care anything about being good," said Arthur, in a reckless manner. "I am worn out with trying. Good people are often very tedious, I think; and there is Ned Clavering, who never thinks or cares whether a thing is good or not. He is just splendid."

Grace had never seen her boy in this mood before. She had always found him softened and penitent when he had been betrayed into any exhibition of the violent temper which she deplored. To hear him defending himself thus and declaring such a wicked indifference to the principles which she had hoped were firmly implanted in his breast smote her to the heart. For a moment she strove to rally, but it was all in vain. She suddenly broke down entirely and covered her face with her hands, while her sobs were almost hysterical.

Arthur threw himself on his knees beside her and vainly tried to soothe her. The boy's sullenness and anger had all vanished at the first tear which fell from his mother's eyes. Never had he seen her moved like this, his lovely, his beautiful mother, whom he loved as he loved no one else in all the world. His own voice began to tremble and his lips to quiver.

"Mother," he said, "what have I said? What have I done? Look at me! Speak to me! Tell me you forgive me!"

"I forgive you," cried Grace, passionately; "but you have broken my heart. You, the child of the covenant, the child of so many prayers, to tell me

that you do not care to be good, that you will not even try!"

Her sobs broke forth afresh. Arthur put his arms about her and wept with her.

"Oh, mother," he said, "I did not mean it. I will try; I do want to be good. But it is so hard for a fellow like me."

"Yes," said his mother, "it is impossible for you to do it in your own strength. But you know where to look for help. Christ can make it easy."

The boy's head went down upon his mother's shoulder, so that she could not see his face as he whispered,

"That is just what I have wanted to ask," he said. "Mother, how did you get to be a Christian?"

The mother's heart gave a quick bound of hope and joy. But she strove not to betray either surprise or emotion as she said,

"Why do you ask me that, Arthur?"

"Because I want to be a Christian myself," said the boy, lifting his head and dashing away his tears. "I have tried and tried, but I cannot make it out. I do not know how any one gets to be a Christian. To-night I had half a mind to give it

up. Oh, mother, tell me what I must do to be a real Christian."

"There is nothing for you to do, Arthur," said his mother. "Christ has done all the work. He died for you. He only asks you to trust yourself to him, to love him and to serve him."

"But I must get rid of this temper before I can be a Christian," said Arthur. "Surely I must get rid of this horrid temper. Just imagine a Christian acting as I did just now. How it would seem!"

"My dear boy," said his mother, fondly, "you cannot get rid of one sin unless you go to Jesus. It is just there that you have failed. You have tried to make yourself good, and you never can do it."

"Must I give up trying to be good, then?" said Arthur, sadly. "I never thought that you would tell me that, mother."

"Oh no," said his mother; "never give up fighting against sin while one sin remains in your heart. But go to Jesus first. Believe in his power to save you. Ask him to take you just as you are, to forgive your sins, to give you his Holy Spirit to help you to give up those sins. You know he will not turn you away, Arthur. Remember all the promises which he has given to

those who come to him—promises which I began to teach you as soon as you could speak. Remember the beautiful story of his life, which we have so often read together. Did he ever turn away any one who came to him for help?"

"No," said Arthur, thoughtfully; "he never did."

"And do you think he will begin with you, Arthur—a child of the covenant, given to him from your very birth, in contradiction of all his promises, in opposition to all that we know of his character and plans? Do you think he will begin with you?"

"No," said Arthur as a bright smile lighted up his face. "I begin to see into it. Christ will save me—not because I am good, but because he is good himself. He cannot break his word, because he is God, and God must be true. I begin to see into it."

"And you see that there is nothing to keep you from being a Christian now, to-night, this very minute, if you are willing to give yourself to Jesus?" said his mother.

Arthur covered his face as he said,

"Oh, mother, pray for me, pray with me as you used to do when I was a little boy."

What a moment for the Christian mother! Never had she prayed so fervently as she did in answer to that appeal. She was carried out of herself. It seemed as if she bore her boy with her into the very presence of God. When she rose from her knees, she silently kissed him and went out.

Arthur looked after her till the door closed upon her, then he paced the room in deep thought for some time. At length he paused and threw back his head with an air of solemn determination as he said,

“O my God! help me to begin to-night; and grant that I may *never* give up, for Christ’s sake.”

“Well, little wife,” said Theodore as Grace once more joined the family group, “did you bring the boy to terms?”

“Please do not talk about it now,” said Grace, gently, and she glanced at her watch, announcing that the study-hour was over. Then there was a grand frolic between papa and the little ones, in the midst of which nurse appeared to carry Mary and Totty off to bed. Before long John and Harry bade their parents “Good-night,” and the husband and wife were left alone.

"Now for a little peace," said Théodore as he launched into an animated description of the events of the day. But Grace would not be beguiled. After a few moments had elapsed she rose to leave the room.

"Must you go?" said Theodore, a little impatiently. "Why do you persist in making such a slave of yourself to those children?"

"I cannot allow any one else to hear them say their prayers," said Grace.

"Nurse is a good woman. I dare say she would attend to it faithfully if you gave her her orders," said Theodore, carelessly.

"No nurse can attend to the mother's duties," said Grace, simply. "God gave *me* these children, and it is from me that their first religious teaching ought to come."

"And do you never tire of such constant watchfulness?" said Théodore.

"Sometimes," said Grace; "but when I do, there is always one thought which helps me to be faithful."

"And that thought—what is it?" said Théodore.

"It is the remembrance of my covenant vows," said Grace as she left the room.

Theodore leaned his head upon his hand and gave himself up to thought.

Covenant vows ! How often in the rush of his worldly business he had lost sight of those vows for a season ! But Grace never seemed to forget. How faithful she had ever been in seeking God for those children ! And yet they were not so very much better than other children, after all. Handsome, talented and interesting they certainly were, and most lovable. But they were nevertheless full of faults : that temper of Arthur's was really a misfortune ; and then Harry—

So lost was he in these musings that he did not hear his wife's entrance, nor did he know that she stood beside him till her hand was placed upon his shoulder and she said,

“ God has given us one of them at last, Theodore. I really believe that our Arthur is a Christian.”

“ Arthur ! ” said Theodore. “ That willful, passionate boy ? ”

“ It is even so,” said Grace. “ It is because he has felt unhappy on account of his sins that he has been so excitable of late. He is very much in earnest.”

“ Then let us thank God,” said Theodore,



gravely. "If Arthur is really in earnest, I think he will hold out. He has a great deal of firmness."

"I think he will be kept," said Grace. "That text is always a great comfort to me: '*Kept* by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.'"





## CHAPTER VIII.

### *COMPARING NOTES.*

**I**AM almost discouraged," said the rich and fashionable Mrs. Clavering as she threw herself into the depths of the most luxurious chair in her luxurious drawing-room—"I am almost discouraged, and that is the truth."

Grace, who was spending the day with her friend by special invitation, could not help smiling.

"Oh yes, you can smile," cried the lady, "but you ought rather to pity me. Grace, do you never have any worries, any troubles, with those children of yours? They are older than mine, and must begin to have their notions and their whims."

"My children are by no means perfect," said Grace, simply, "yet they are a great comfort to me."

"That is more than I can say of mine," said Josie. "They hardly give me any peace of my life even now, and they are growing more willful every day."

As the two friends were seated side by side it was quite evident that time had dealt with Josie more tenderly than with Grace. The young matron was handsomer than ever. Hers was a style of beauty that does not quickly fade, and her easy, luxurious life had contributed every possible aid in preserving it. The clear, olive complexion still had its brilliant carnation tint, the slender hands were still soft and white, the perfect figure had lost none of its grace. Everything that dress could do had been done to enhance the effect of her beauty. Her rich silk was made in the best style and fitted to a charm; her glossy, abundant hair was arranged with the most artistic effect; costly gems adorned her taper fingers, and large single diamonds, in a setting of plain gold, were pendent from her ears.

A wife and a mother, she still reigned in society as a beauty, and her worldly husband took great pride in the attentions that were everywhere bestowed upon his fascinating wife.

Grace had lost both flesh and color; her hair

was beginning to show here and there a silver thread, and her dress was almost Quaker-like in its simplicity.

The contrast in manner was as great as in appearance between these two. Josie was lively, talkative and witty; Grace calm, dignified and quiet.

The contrast in character was even greater. Josie was either gay almost to levity or plunged in despondency; Grace was even-tempered and cheerful, and one could always see a light reflected through her eyes that came from a soul at peace.

The only wonder was that the friendship begun in early life should never have been broken. But Josie clung to Grace with such a fond affection that Grace could never cast her off, although she was often painfully conscious that in everything save in love they had drifted far apart in the changing years.

"I do not think it does much good to worry over children's faults," said Grace. "One must see them, but I never look for perfection in this world. I do the very best I can in the training of my children, and then I give them up to God."

"Give them up to God!" said Josie, impatiently. "Excuse me, my dear, but that sounds to me very much like religious cant. When my Maude al-

most wears my life out with teasing me for things that are quite unsuited to her years, and when Agnes utterly refuses to apply herself to her studies, and when Ned will stay out nights in spite of all I can do, how can I give them up to God? I have to take them in hand myself and do the best I can."

"I never allow my boys to go out in the evening unless it be in some company where I can be present myself, or where I know the influence to be good," said Grace. "Both Mr. Westervelt and myself are quite decided on that point. My friend Dr. Graham warned us never to lose our hold over our boys in this respect. 'Satan is ever busy,' he said, 'but he boldly stalks abroad at night. I hardly ever knew a boy to get into serious trouble whose habit it was to spend his evenings at home.'"

"But how do you keep your boys?" said Josie. "I have talked to Ned till I am tired, and his father has thrashed him soundly more than once, but he grows worse instead of better. I cannot see that it all does the least particle of good."

"I have never had any trouble about it," said Grace. "My boys hardly ever even ask to go."

"That is strange," said Josie, laughing. "I

should say, now, that your Harry was just the boy for mischief."

Grace sighed as she said,

"Yes, Harry is full of mischief enough, but he has never seemed to care for that particular kind of mischief. We always have pleasant times at home in the evenings, and I allow the boys to invite their young friends to visit them, when they are such as I can approve, quite often. We cannot be together much as a family during the day, so each evening we all agree to have a sort of family reunion. We meet to do our best to make each other happy. The boys have their games, in which their father and I often join them; the girls have their music, and even Totty can sing quite sweetly; and then we all talk over the trials and the triumphs of the day, secure of sympathy. Oh, we all enjoy our evenings together. I do not think the boys would like to go out for entertainment even if they were allowed to do it."

"Ah, I see," said Josie. "But I cannot do much for Ned in the way of making his home pleasant. We are out so much ourselves that it is quite impossible. When I am going to a party, it takes me half the evening to dress properly, and

the children are in bed and asleep long before I get home. If I tell Ned to invite boys here, he brings in a rough set that tease the girls or destroy my furniture. So I let him go out sometimes, and it would all be well enough if he would come home early, as he is told. But he will not obey me, and what can I do?"

"Can you not give up some of the parties, Josie, for the sake of your boy?" said Grace, timidly. "He seems very fond of you."

Josie looked vexed and annoyed.

"I am sure I should be glad to give them up," she said, "but Mr. Clavering will not hear of it. He says he will not have me tied down with cares, and that I can hire people to look after the children. He is willing to spend any amount of money upon them, but he insists that I shall be free."

"I could not be free," said Grace. "I think it is such a responsible thing to be a mother. There are the habits to form, the dispositions to study, the minds to cultivate, the bodies to care for, and then, oh, Josie, think of the souls!"

"My dear," said Josie, "that is one thing which lies beyond us, and I am thankful for it. Only God can save the soul, and nothing that we can do will avail for that."

"I know," said Grace; "but we can do our best to train the soul to right habits."

"Now I cannot understand you," said Josie, impatiently. "The soul has to be changed by the Spirit of God. The Bible tells us of the new birth, the change of heart. It is no less than a miracle of grace."

"No less than a miracle," said Grace; "and yet I think we are in a measure responsible for the souls of our children. We can bring them into a precious covenant relation with God; we can teach them how to pray; we can teach them in God's word; we can show them the beauty of our religion; we can educate them in its principles; we can teach them to love to go to church."

"Speak for yourself there," said Josie. "My children hate to go to church, yet I always make them go whether I care to go myself or not."

"I never have *made* mine go," said Grace, "but I have always taken them with me, and they like to go. Then there are so many influences that can be brought to bear upon a child through family prayers, a Christian example, a Christian home."

"I cannot do as I would with my children in these respects," said Josie, sadly. "We have no family altar, and Mr. Clavering will laugh at the



restraints of religion and make light of them even before the children."

Grace laid her hand upon that of her friend and gave it a sympathizing pressure, but she only said,

"There should be a family altar, dear. Its hallowed influences and associations are precious beyond all measure. Can you not pray with your children yourself?"

"No," said Josie, "I cannot. I pray for my children, but I never can pray with them."

"Ah, dear Josie, I am so sorry," said Grace. "If you had only begun when they were little, and had been faithful to the duty from the first, it would have come so easy now, and it might have kept them from drifting away from you as you complain they do."

"Do you pray with your children?" said Josie.

"Always."

"Well, I cannot understand it," said Josie, thoughtfully. "You work for your children all the time, according to your own showing. You and their father give up your whole lives to them, and yet you say you give them up to God. Confess, my dear, that there is an inconsistency in this."

"Not at all," said Grace. "I do all I can to make them what I would have them, and then I cast my care as to the result upon the Lord. Often, when I have been grieved by wayward humors that I know not how to deal with, I have gone to God in prayer, and it has happened to me that the child's mood has changed without my speaking a word. It has then seemed to me as if the Spirit of the Lord had moved the heart of my child in answer to my prayer."

"I see," said Josie. "You think that the Christian parent, whilst looking to God and resting on him, should also carefully seek to improve all the means and opportunities for the child, that the Spirit may make them effectual unto salvation."

"Yes," said Grace; "and that has been the aim of my life in the education of my children."

"You make me wish more than ever that I could have had my children baptized," said Josie, thoughtfully.

"Why, I thought you could see no sense in infant baptism?" said Grace. "I am sure I have heard you say so."

"Yet when my Ned was born, I longed to have him baptized," said Josie. "I wanted to give him to God in some special and public way, and I was

going to talk to you about it, but Mr. Clavering opposed it. He said he would never have his boy bound in any way to any religious creeds, and that it was all perfect nonsense. I saw that it would make him really angry to persist in carrying out my own views, so I gave up ; but I shed more tears about it than I have about anything else in the whole course of my married life."

Grace longed to comfort her friend and to try to strengthen her in her religious faith, which was so evidently yielding more and more to the influence of the unbelieving husband. But what could she say? As she deliberated the opportunity was lost, for Mr. Clavering came in, and he was soon followed by Theodore.

An elegant dinner was served. Josie soon regained her usual spirits ; Mr. Clavering played the part of the polished, gentlemanly host to perfection, as he always did. In the evening the two ladies sang together several songs, in which their voices blended so harmoniously that the listeners heartily applauded them. They parted mutually satisfied with each other.

" My dear," said Mr. Clavering, " there is something wonderfully attractive about that little Mrs. Westervelt. I do not know exactly what the

charm is, but I cannot rid myself of its influence. I think of starlight or moonlight whenever I look into her face."

"And I think Mr. Westervelt a remarkably entertaining person," said Josie, with a coquettish sparkle in her dark eyes. "I always did admire him greatly, for that matter, although I cannot say I ever found him either mooney or spooney."

"Oh what a wretched attempt at wit your jealousy has hurried you into!" said her husband, laughing. "But I was serious in what I said about your friend. When she utters some holy thought, I feel that she really means it."

"And do you not feel that with other Christians?" said Josie, quickly.

"Oh no!" said Mr. Clavering, with some vehemence. "There is a great deal of Christian talk that does not impress me in the least. But when Mrs. Westervelt speaks, I feel that perhaps, after all, there may be something in the religion which is such a reality to her. And I sometimes wish that I could believe in it myself. Perhaps I should be a happier and better man."

He leaned against the mantel-piece and gazed thoughtfully down upon the glowing coals. Perhaps, if Josie could have helped his thoughts in

the right direction just then, much good might have resulted to them both. But her jealousy was aroused, and she spoke in her usual impulsive way.

"Walter," she said, "have you never felt so about me? Do you not think that I, too, find a reality in my religion?"

He carelessly caressed her as he replied:

"You? Well, I never thought you were cut out for a saint. But don't you fret about it, Pussy. You are in every way charming. I never saw a woman who could in any way compare with you. I think you are far better suited to me for not being *too* religious."

Josie suddenly burst into tears and left the room. Her conscience told her that she had indeed been no true saint, and she began to repent that she had not been more firm in adhering to her own convictions of right. In the mean time, the friends who had left them were speaking of both the husband and wife in terms of the highest praise.

"If he only were a Christian, what a man Mr. Clavering would be!" said Grace, regretfully. "I often think what an influence for good he might exert."

"And if Josie had taken a firmer stand at the beginning of her Christian life, what a perfect woman she would be!" said Theodore. "I often think that she might have effected quite a change in Clavering if she had only earnestly and consistently tried to do so."

"They are delightful people to visit," said Grace. "They both of them understand the art of entertaining to perfection."

As she uttered this last sentence she was ascending the steps of her own home, and Arthur opened the door, saying,

"Oh, I am so glad you have come! We have all missed you so."

Grace laughed.

"It is pleasant to be missed," she said as she placed her hand upon the arm of her tall son and accompanied him into the house.





## CHAPTER IX.

### *THE FIRST BREAK IN THE FAMILY.*

**G**RACE," said Theodore one evening after the young people had gathered around the fire for a social chat, "is it not a pity that a group like this should ever be broken up? I am often tempted to wish that our family could always be kept together just as they are."

"Do not speak of breaking up," said Grace, with a look of distress. "It is bad enough to give our thoughts to such a subject when we are forced to do it."

"We are forced to it now," said her husband. "Arthur's teacher told me to-day that Arthur had long been fitted for college, and that in justice to the boy I ought to send him."

"Have you quite decided to send Arthur to college?" said Grace, faintly, for her heart clung so to her eldest son that she could hardly bring



The first Break in the Circle.





herself to entertain the thought of parting from him.

"Yes," said her husband, "the boy wants to go. He is growing more and more interested in his studies, and Dr. Graham thinks he ought to have every educational advantage that can be secured to him."

"Oh, Arthur," said Mary, in a grieved tone, "do you really want to go away to college and leave us?"

"I want to be an educated man," said Arthur, proudly. "I have noticed that it is the educated men who command the most respect, and I think they enjoy the most, too."

Grace looked at her manly, handsome, eighteen-year-old son, and felt that the time had come. She could no longer hold him. He must go out into the world to meet and do battle with its temptations alone. The thought smote her to the heart. She could hardly restrain her tears. At this juncture there were steps in the hall, and Mr. Percy came in, accompanied by his youngest son, Clarence.

"What is the matter here?" said the lively, hearty old gentleman. "You all look as if you thought it a sin to smile, and that is a rare thing

in *this* family. Even Harry there has a face as long as my arm."

"I am dying of envy, sir," said Harry, quickly. "That is all that is the matter with me. They are talking of sending Arthur to college, and he is to go away from home and see a little of the world, which is just what I am longing to do on my own account."

"Time enough for you yet, my boy," said Mr. Percy, with a fond glance. Harry had always been a great favorite with his grandfather. "But I am glad to hear this of Arthur. I hope he means to make a man of himself and do us all credit."

"He will have to look pretty well to his ways if he steers safely through college," said Clarence Percy.

"Why? You came out all right, Uncle Clare," said Arthur.

"In the end, yes," replied his uncle; "but I received some wounds in my progress that I fear will always leave a scar. I should not like to have Arthur do exactly as I did."

"Wounds! Scars!" said little Alice, opening her eyes very wide. "Oh, Uncle Clare, did they really hurt you? Where are the scars? Let me see them."

Her uncle took her on his knee and gently smoothed her waving hair as he said,

"I cannot show them to you, Totty. They are moral scars, not visible to the eye."

As the child vainly tried to make out his meaning Mr. Percy shook his head.

"Let bygones be bygones, Clarence," he said. "It is never worth while to revive the memory of disagreeable things."

"Only as a warning to others," said Clarence. "I will just say to Arthur that he will be more apt to keep free both from the wounds and the scars if he always bears it in mind that he is sent to college to work and not to amuse himself."

"I will try to do my best," said Arthur; and he looked so firm and manly as he said it that somehow every one present was inspired with new confidence in him.

"I hope you will not have much hazing to bear," said his uncle. "I think you are not one of the kind that they will attempt to impose upon. But if you do find them a little rough just at first, do not show too much temper. The annoyances are but trifles after all."

"I cannot be quite so sure of myself there," said Arthur, laughing. "My temper will not

stand a great deal. But I shall try to keep it down if they do not provoke me too far."

Then followed a long discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of college life. The gentlemen revived so many memories of their own college experiences that the young people grew quite excited and merry over them.

Grace alone remained silent and abstracted through it all. She could not laugh at the jokes which the others so heartily enjoyed, she could not be beguiled by the funny stories of scrapes and adventures which the others found so amusing. One thought was present to her mind: Her boy was going away to be tried and proved; would he stand the test? Too well she remembered how nearly Clarence had made shipwreck of himself, and Arthur was more popular in character, more impulsive in temperament, than her brother had ever been.

When the company had broken up and the children had gone to bed, Arthur stole back into the parlor. He saw his mother standing in front of the fire with her hands clasped and with a troubled, abstracted look upon her face. Instinctively, he had known that he should find her there; and he could guess the tenor of her thoughts, there

had always been so perfect a confidence and sympathy between mother and son. Clasping his arms about her, "Do not break your heart about it, little mother," he said. "I promise you that I will be a good boy."

He spoke as simply as he had done when he had sought her forgiveness for some childish fault. She could not help smiling, though her eyes filled with tears.

"If I could only be sure of that, Arthur," she said, "I would gladly let you go. But you do not know how hard it is to be a good boy when there is so much to tempt you to forget."

He drew her to the sofa and seated himself beside her.

"Let us have a good, free talk," he said, "just as we used to do when I was a little boy."

Grace leaned her head upon his shoulder and looked up into his smiling face.

"Ah, my boy," she said, "you are getting beyond me now. You are going into a world that I have never tried; you will encounter temptations that I have never felt. How, then, can I warn or advise you."

His face grew grave as he bent over and kissed her.

"You can love me and pray for me, little mother, whatever comes," he said. "You do not know what a help you have been to me. And you have taught me where to go for help when my own strength fails. I shall not go alone into this new life."

"Oh, Arthur," said Grace, "I am glad you have spoken of that. I have long believed that you were a Christian, but I am glad to know from your own lips that you are resting in Christ as your Saviour."

"I began that night that you talked to me about it," said Arthur. "I have never gone back. And now, mother, don't you think it would be a good thing for me to come out and take my stand as a Christian before the world?"

"If it is your wish to do so, Arthur, nothing would make me happier," said his mother.

"It is my wish," said Arthur. "If I am going away to be among strangers, I would rather wear my true colors from the first. It would help me to keep straight."

"You are right in that," said Grace. "If you would not mind, dear, I wish you would talk to Dr. Graham about your purposes and wishes. He will be most glad to see you."

"I will see him to-morrow," said Arthur, promptly.

And when at last the mother and son parted for the night, both were greatly cheered and encouraged.

Arthur did talk to Dr. Graham, and it was soon announced to the family that he was to make a profession of religion before he went away. The news made quite a sensation among his brothers and sisters, who all showed a certain amount of sympathy with him. John in particular seemed so interested that Arthur was moved to say to him,

"My dear fellow, I wish you were with me in this. We are so near of an age, and it would be so pleasant for us to take the right start together."

John shook his head.

"I am not ready," he said. "To tell the truth, I have never felt myself to be such a *great sinner* as they say I am. I have always tried to do right, and I am sure I love God."

"I never had any doubts with regard to myself on that score," said Arthur, humbly. "My only fear was that I was *such a sinner* that I never could be any better."



"Well, you were a pretty hard case, that is a fact, Arthur," said John. "But you know I never acted as you did."

"I know you were always better in conduct than I was," said Arthur. "But are you sure that all is well with you, John?"

"No," said John. "But I cannot feel that I have been wicked, and I do not know what great sins I have to repent of."

"Oh, John, you are all wrong somehow, and I do not know how to set you right. You had better talk to mother. She will help you if any one can."

John tried to laugh off his brother's words, and he refused to talk to any one. Yet from that night he began to think about his own state in the sight of God as he never had thought of it before.

And Arthur, the child of such tender hopes and so many prayers, went out from among them to do his own lifework. What a comfort it was to the Christian parents to feel that he had not gone out from the care of the covenant-keeping God whom he had solemnly pledged himself both to serve and to obey !



## CHAPTER X.

### *TROUBLE WITH HARRY.*

**G**RACE had just received her first letter from Arthur, and was very happy over it. The boy spoke so hopefully and cheerfully of the new sphere of action in which he found himself that she was greatly encouraged. He described the friends that he had already made, the manner in which he was passing his examinations, a few of the difficulties he had to contend with, and concluded thus :

“But give yourself no uneasiness, you dear little mother, for I mean to make it my first aim to be true to my principles and to improve my opportunities. I have already seen the need of Uncle Clare's caution, and I mean to heed it. There are some pretty bad fellows here. I shall steer clear of them. They seem to take to me, I do not know why. I hope they do not think I am

one of their sort. My chum is as steady as a deacon. I chose him because I know my own weakness, and I am not going to throw myself into temptation. The hazing is pretty trying, but I do not mind it so very much. I have managed to keep my temper thus far, though it has been pretty hard work sometimes. I did knock one fellow down, but I was not angry. I did it because I found it was necessary. One has to stand up for his own rights. It taught him a lesson; I think he will not meddle with me after this. Some of the fellows have started a temperance society. I think I shall join. It will be a sort of a safeguard to myself, and perhaps the example may do something for others. I do not suppose I have much influence, but what I have, I want to throw on the right side."

Altogether, the news was very satisfactory, and the mother gave herself up to a day-dream as to the future of these sons. Arthur would no doubt be a distinguished man. She did not fear so much for his high temper now. Every year he was bringing it more perfectly under control. Then it was such a help in regard to the others to have the first-born go right. They would be very apt to follow the example of their elder brother.

Perhaps they would confide all their little difficulties and temptations to one so near their own age more freely than they would to their parents. John was all right now, if he only would learn to feel his need of a Saviour, and Harry—why, even Harry seemed to be trying to do well of late. And Harry was the most talented one of them all, if he would only apply himself. Perhaps Harry would outshine them all. He was so brilliant—so popular; if he only could develop a little more strength of character!

Ah, golden dreams! In the very midst of them, and while the mother's face still glowed in the light of them, there was a knock at the door.

Mrs. Westervelt hardly had time to say, "Come in!" ere the maid-servant who attended to her sewing entered abruptly.

"Would you please come to Master Harry, ma'am?" she said. "I am thinking that he's very ill."

The mother's fears at once took the alarm. She sprang up, saying,

"Harry ill? Why, he was perfectly well this morning. Where is he?"

"He is in his own room, ma'am," said the girl. "I was just putting away some shirts that I had

been mending, when he came in and threw himself down upon the bed with a little groan. It gave me a sort of a start, and I went to see what was the matter. But not a word could I get out of him but to 'Go away,' and 'Mind my own business.' So I came straight to you, ma'am, for I know he's not right. It's not like Master Harry to be so cross, and then his face tells its own story. He is as white as the sheet itself."

Mrs. Westervelt had taken the camphor-bottle, and was hurrying up stairs ere the story was half told. She found Harry looking so ill that she uttered an exclamation of alarm as soon as her eyes rested upon him.

His face was ghastly in hue, and the large dark circles under his eyes and his pinched and sunken features were so strangely in contrast to his general appearance that she was greatly alarmed.

"Jane," she said, "go for the doctor. Go at once!"

But at this Harry caught her by the arm and gasped out,

"No, do not. There is nothing much the matter. Send Jane away, then I will tell you."

Mrs. Westervelt told the girl to go, but to remain in the sewing-room, so that she could still

send her, if necessary, to summon the doctor. No sooner did Harry find himself alone with his mother than he said, with a great effort,

“Ned Clavering gave me a cigar, and I smoked it. Don’t be frightened or make a fuss. I shall be all right by and by.”

The fumes of the tobacco, which still lingered in his clothes and hair, confirmed the truth of this statement.

The mother’s heart sank within her. Harry had promised her faithfully that he would not go with Ned any more. It was not two weeks since the promise had been given, and here it was not only broken, but the tempter had led Harry into an act of disobedience which he had never been guilty of before. Tears silently fell from her eyes as she began to bathe the brow of the suffering boy with some of the camphor. She could not speak.

“Mother,” said Harry, “do not cry. I forgot—”

But here he was taken so ill that he could say no more. It was some time ere the distressing sickness and nausea began to pass away. Then he sank into a quiet sleep. His mother had ministered to his comfort as tenderly as though she

had no fault to complain of, but never had she experienced such a sense of discouragement in regard to this wayward boy. Perhaps the revulsion of feeling made the disappointment all the harder to bear. What could she say to him? What could she do with him? Truly, she did not know. She went to her room and asked God to change his heart, to incline him to the right, and in the very act she found comfort.

When Mr. Westervelt came in to dinner, he at once noticed her pale face and abstracted air, but she laughed at his anxiety and exerted herself to be cheerful. Arthur's letter was read and talked over. There was so much to be said on this subject that for a time no mention was made of Harry. Then the inquiry was made,

"Where is Harry?"

"Harry is sick, father," said Mary, "but mother thinks it will not amount to much. He has one of his headaches."

Mr. Westervelt glanced at his wife. Her face flushed, then grew pale. He said nothing more about Harry till the girls had left the room. Then he said,

"Now, my dear, what has that unfortunate boy been up to? Anything worse than usual?"

"His illness has been caused by smoking a cigar," said Grace. "He seemed to suffer very severely. I really felt sorry for him."

"He deserves to suffer," was the stern reply. "He has disobeyed my positive commands. What could have induced him to do it?"

"It was Ned Clavering who tempted him, as usual," said Grace. "He never seems to have the power to say 'No' where Ned is concerned."

"I thought he had promised not to go with Ned?" said her husband.

"He did," said Grace. "But of what use is it for Harry to promise anything? He is so weak, so pitiably weak."

"I really think it is my duty to punish him," said Theodore.

"To what purpose?" said Grace. "Harry takes punishment as a matter of course. I think he regards it as in some sort an atonement for the wrong."

"Well, I confess I am at a loss as to the best way to deal with Harry," said Theodore. "What can any one do with a boy who yields to every influence that is brought to bear upon him?"

"Pray for him," said Grace, gently. "He is a child of the covenant. That is my only hope."



God will not give him up. It must be that in some way he will be brought right at last."

"I wish I had your faith," said Theodore. "Well, dear, I will leave him to you. He is so devoted to you that it will move him to penitence to know that he has grieved you."

"It is easy enough to touch his heart," said Grace. "The only thing is that his repentance does not last. However, I will go to him and do my best."

She found Harry wide awake and looking more like himself; but when she entered the room, he turned so that his face was hidden by the pillows. She handed him a cup of coffee which she had brought to him.

"Drink this," she said; "I think it will do you good."

He looked up at her in surprise that she uttered no reproaches.

"Oh, mother," he said, "how good you are! I love you—I love you!"

She only answered by holding the cup to his lips and bidding him once more to drink his coffee. Then, as he finished, she quietly placed the empty cup upon the table. He wondered more and more at her strange calmness.

"Are you not going to scold me?" he said. "You do not know how bad I have been. I went with Ned, and I have broken my word. But that is not all. I did not go to school to-day at all. Ned coaxed me, and I went off on a spree with him. That is how I came to smoke the cigar. He introduced me to some other fellows, and they all smoked, so when they offered me a cigar too, I was ashamed to refuse."

"Poor Harry!" said his mother as she seated herself beside him and gently stroked his hair; "how I pity you!"

Her tears began to fall.

"Pity me!" said impulsive Harry. "You ought to scold me—you ought to punish me. I should like it far better than to have you treat me like this."

"No, Harry, I am not going to punish you," said his mother. "The only object in the punishment of a child is to bring him to a better mind, to teach him to correct his faults. I do not think it has that effect upon you, so I shall not try it."

"Are you going to give me up, then?" cried Harry, in a tone of distress.

"No, Harry, I shall never give you up, even if

you continue to wring my heart as you have done to-day."

She grew so pale that Harry feared she was about to faint away. He sprang up and put his arms about her, and his voice was broken by sobs as he said,

"Mother, dear mother, do not look like that. I cannot bear it. Only smile and be happy, and I will do anything you like. I will give Ned Clavering up from this time out; I will be as good as I know how; I will never—"

She laid her hand upon his lips.

"Hush, my son!" she said. "It is a serious thing to make promises, a dreadful thing to break them. If you mean what you say, let us confess these sins to the God whose love you have grieved even more than you have mine. Let us ask him to give you strength by his Holy Spirit that you may have the power to say 'No' when your conscience tells you that you ought to say it."

She prayed with him long and fervently, and Harry felt so thoroughly humbled and conscience-stricken that he was sure he would never go so far wrong again. Moreover, his pride was touched by the tone his mother had taken.

"I will let her see," he said to himself, "that

I can say 'No' if I choose to say it. I verily believe she thinks I am a weak-headed simpleton."

Poor Harry! He did not know himself. In the strength of his new resolution he kept clear of his friend Ned for a week. Then he was as completely under his influence as ever.

This same Ned was as dangerous a companion as Harry could well have chosen. In personal appearance and disposition he was very like his mother, while he had the insinuating address, the polished manners and the infidel principles of his father. His natural faults had been strengthened by his education. In his father's eyes he could do no wrong.

Mr. Clavering was proud of the boy's handsome person and brilliant intellect, and in favor of allowing him the largest liberty. It pleased him to hear Ned argue with his mother against her religious opinions and sustain himself so well. He therefore encouraged him in doing so, and applauded him for refusing to yield his convictions to any creed that his reason could not fully apprehend. He gave him a large allowance of pocket-money, and never questioned him as to how he disposed of it. Josie tried to hold her boy within proper bounds, but she was too much en-

grossed with her own pleasures to take note of all his doings, and her fitful attempts at discipline did him more harm than good.

So Ned had grown to be a reckless, dashing, daring fellow, the terror and torment of his teachers and the delight and envy of his school-mates.

Of all these latter he liked Harry best, and always chose him as his companion and the confidant of his plans.

Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt loved the boy for the sake of their old friend and for his own winning ways. But when, after repeated warnings to Harry against the baneful influence of this friendship and misdemeanors on his part, they found that he was completely under Ned's control, they agreed that the only safe course was to separate the two boys. So the intimacy was forbidden, and Harry made promises, which were broken as soon as Ned chose to make him break them; thus the anxious parents were sorely perplexed and disturbed by fresh revelations of poor well-meaning Harry's infirmities.



## CHAPTER XI.

*MAUDE'S DISCONTENT.—MARY'S DISAPPOINTMENT.*

**T**HE sunny side of Broadway on a sunny day, when all the belles were at their best, all the housekeepers were anxiously flitting in and out of stores in the endless routine of shopping, and when the displays from those same store windows were really marvelous in richness and beauty—such was the day and such the scene when a beautiful girl of fourteen exclaimed to her companion of about the same age,

“Oh, I can assure you, my dear, I am utterly and hopelessly wretched.”

It was a rather startling announcement to come from so young a person, particularly when that person was so daintily arrayed and evidently so tenderly cared for by somebody. But it was uttered in evident sincerity. There was a look of

utter discontent upon the pretty face and a decided pout upon the pretty mouth.

"Oh, my dear Maude," said her companion, "you surely cannot mean it. Think how much you have to make you happy!"

"I do mean it, Mary," was the decided reply as a toss of the velvet turban and golden curls emphasized the sentiment. "I do not have any pleasure at all as other girls of my age do. Why, I cannot even dress as I like. Do you know I have had this turban two months at the very least? It is all out of style, and yet mamma refuses to get me a new one. Then I am absolutely perishing for a black silk, and mamma only laughs at me when I ask her for it. She says I am nothing but a little girl, and too young to wear such a dress if I had one."

"Well," said Mary, laughing, "you *are* rather young, Maude."

"I know it," said Maud. "That is one thing that I fret about. I want to go to parties, and to wear elegant ball-dresses, and to be admired. Think what fun it would be! And here I am doomed to be shut up in the school-room for three years to come. Mamma says I shall not come out till I am seventeen at the very least, and she would

prefer to have me wait till I am eighteen. Isn't it tedious?"

"I like to go to school," said Mary. "I am sure I think we have real pleasant times. My mother says we had better make the most of the present, for our school-days are our happiest days."

"Oh yes," said Maude, with an air of disdain. "That is just what mamma says. But I know better. I know it must be nicer to go to balls and operas, and to do nothing but amuse myself, than to be studying lessons from morning till night. And who would not rather have beaux to tell one that she is pretty and charming, and all that sort of thing, than to hear the never-ending repetition of 'My dear, you must sit more gracefully at your desk,' 'My dear, that expression is very awkward,' 'My dear, how would you parse that sentence?' etc., etc.? Oh, mamma cannot humbug me. She would not stand it a week, and she knows it."

"Mother says that every phase of life has its disadvantages as well as its pleasures," said Mary.

"That sounds just like your mother," said Maude. "She is so quiet and sensible. She always seems happy, and yet I should think she would have a dreadfully dull time."



"She never is dull," said Mary, warmly. "I would rather be like my mother than like any one else in the world. It seems to me that she is almost perfect."

"I wish I could say as much for mine," said Maude, with another toss of the golden curls. "I think she is too cross sometimes for anything. She snubs Ned and she lectures me till we are completely out of patience. But I have one treat to look forward to. Papa has promised me that on the evening of my birthday I shall have a party—a real splendid party—and that I shall invite any one I choose, and that I shall order the supper myself."

"Oh how nice that will be!" said Mary, with enthusiasm.

"Nice! It will be splendid," said Maude. "I am going to have it as much like mamma's parties as I can. I am going to have a band, and for once I will dance to my heart's content. And I will tease mamma's very life out if she does not get me a lovely new dress just for the occasion."

"What kind of a dress?" said Mary, in a tone of great interest. "I think you look lovely in white."

"White!" said Maude, scornfully. "I am per-

fectly sick of it. That is what mamma always says: 'Simple white is the most suitable for a young girl.' No. I mean to have a lovely pink silk. I saw one at Stewart's of the very shade that I have set my heart upon."

A little more chat of the same nature, and the girls reached the corner where they were obliged to part in order to go to their respective homes. There, with many last words, they took leave of each other, Maude throwing in a final remark as she turned away:

"Of course you will come to my party, and I want you to look your best, for every one knows that you are my very dearest friend."

Which remark sent Mary home in a very thoughtful mood. She was naturally a sprightly girl, prone to laugh on the slightest provocation in a manner that brought to light two very bewitching dimples upon her rosy cheeks. It was quite unusual for her to enter the house so gravely and then go so quietly to seek her mother—so unusual that her mother glanced at her anxiously as she sank into the seat by the fireside, and said,

"Has anything gone wrong with you, dear? Do you not feel well?"

"I am quite well," said Mary Westervelt—for it was no other than this eldest daughter of Theodore and Grace whom we have been accompanying in her afternoon walk with Maude Clavering—"I am quite well, and nothing has gone wrong with me. Why did you ask the question, mother?"

"Because you do not seem quite like yourself," was the reply. "You seem so very sober."

"And can I not be sober once in a while without alarming my friends?" said Mary, laughing. "The truth is that I was wondering which of my dresses was the most suitable to wear to an evening-party."

"I do not think you have any dress that will be perfectly suitable," said her mother. "But what has turned your thoughts in that strange direction?"

"Maude's party that she is to have to celebrate her birthday," said Mary, eagerly. "Of course I shall be invited, and Maude says I must look my very best."

She suddenly went to her mother and sank down on a low bench at her feet, looking up into her face with an eager, hopeful glance which seemed to demand both sympathy and aid. Her

mother felt a strange sensation of mingled pain and pleasure as she looked down into those beseeching eyes. So beautiful, so good and so hopeful a creature it were surely delightful to indulge. Yet would indulgence in this instance be for the highest good, the real happiness, of the child?

Hardly knowing how to interpret her mother's silence, the young girl went on:

"It is to be a real party, mother—as nearly like those that Mrs. Clavering gives to grown-up ladies as may be; and Maude says she will have music by a band, and dancing, and an elegant supper that she is to order herself. And Maude is to have a new pink silk; and it will be great fun. Only, what can I wear? That is the question."

"No, my darling, that is not the question," said her mother as she gently laid her hand upon the glossy, nut-brown hair. "The question is, ought you to go at all?"

Tears sprang to the girl's eyes as she said,

"Oh, mother! Of course I ought to go. I am Maude's most intimate friend. And all the girls in our set will be there. And it will be thought very strange if I stay away. Besides, Maude would be so vexed. Of course I must go."

“Do you not know, my dear, that your father and I never go to fashionable entertainments of this kind?” said her mother. “And do you not know that one reason for this is that we have never thought such amusements consistent for Christians?”

“Yes,” said Mary; “but then, you know, you and father are members of the church.”

Her mother smiled.

“You admit, then, that such worldly pleasures are not for members of the church, but for the people of the world?” she said.

“Oh yes, I suppose so,” said Mary. “I do not think I should like to see church members at gay parties and such places.”

“Then do you not see that you have settled the question for yourself, my dear child?” said her mother. “You have been a member of the church from your very infancy; as such I shall require you to live so long as you are under my control—as such I hope you will choose to live when the time comes for you to regulate your own conduct.”

“But Mrs. Clavering is a member of the church, mother,” pleaded Mary, “and she goes to balls and parties and operas all the time.”

“And do you think she is as happy and useful in

her Christian life as you would wish to be, Mary?" said her mother.

"No," said Mary; "I never would want to be just like Mrs. Clavering in all things. But I do not want to think about that now."

"But this is the very time for you to think of it, dear," said her mother. "If you begin to live her life, you will be very apt to follow on in the way you begin. So give up all thoughts of this party. I cannot allow you to go."

Then Mary, for the first time in her life, flew into a passion with her mother—a real, down-right passion. She sprang up and angrily repulsed her caresses as she said,

"You make me hate the very name of religion. You may make me yield to your wishes now; but when the time comes for me to act for myself, I will go to balls as much as I like, and no one can stop it."

"I hope that God will bring you to a better mind, Mary," said her mother. "Now you may leave me. I would rather be alone just now."

Mary fled to her own room, threw herself upon the bed and cried as if her heart would break. Her mother threw herself upon her knees, and prayed that God would remember his covenant

and draw her erring child to himself. When Mr. Westervelt came in, she told him her new trouble.

"Oh, it is so hard to bring up a family of children in Christian principles," she sighed. "Everything is against me."

"But God is for us," he said, kindly. "Mary is young and loves her own way. It is natural."

"I know it is natural," said Grace. "But she has always been so docile, so reasonable, that I must own I was greatly surprised at such an outbreak from her."

"She will soon come down and tell you she is sorry for her fault," said her husband.

But he was mistaken. Mary did not appear again that night. When the servant went up to call her to tea, she sent word that she had a headache and would like to be excused. Grace was greatly distressed.

"It was very hard for me to refuse the child, Theodore," she said, "but I know I was right. To own the truth, I longed to see her in some charming dress that would show off her beauty to the best advantage; I longed to let her go; I longed to have the world admire her. But I thought of my baptismal vows, and how could I

throw her into the very midst of temptation with her unformed principles and her inexperienced youth?"

"You could not, of course," said Theodore. "That she should behave in the way she does is a proof that her heart is too much set upon these vanities now."

He took up his newspaper, and thought of the matter no more. But Grace passed a sleepless night. All through the dark hours she lay, with folded hands, praying for her child.

In the mean time, that child was undergoing any variety of changing moods as she thought over her disappointment and its probable results. At first she was too angry for any softer thoughts to find their way into her mind.

"It is too hateful," she thought. "Maude says she has a hard time; I wonder what she would say if she were treated as I am? Mother thinks she will make me a Christian by being so strict, but she will be disappointed. I will be as worldly and wicked as I can, just to show her that I can be hateful too. If she does not care for me, I will not care for her."

Finally, as passion spent itself, the more tender mood asserted itself: "I know what she meant



when she said I was a member of the church. She had me baptized when I was a baby, and she taught me about God as soon as I could understand. I suppose she wanted me to grow up to love him. But I do not love him as I ought. If I had my way I would be just as gay and careless and self-indulgent as Maude."

Then, as the tender mood prevailed, came a twinge of conscience :

"Oh what a wicked girl I am ! It is well I have such a good mother to look after me. She knows well enough that I do not love God as I ought. She knows that I would grow worse and worse if I had my own way. She wants me to be a real Christian. She wants me to go to heaven when I die. And she is trying to help me. Oh, how could I treat her so ? How could I see her look so hurt and grieved, and not care ?"

Then came thoughts of God, and something within prompted the young girl to kneel down and pray for his forgiveness and help. She yielded to the feeling and asked God to help her to do right, and then she grew more calm ; her sobs ceased, and she slept quietly till the sunbeams stole into the room to awaken her with their brightness.

Grace rose early, as was her custom, to go about her morning duties. As she was attending to her pet plants a pair of arms were suddenly thrown about her neck and a subdued voice said,

“Darling mother, can you forgive me?”

Grace could hardly believe the evidence of her senses.

Mary was of so proud a nature that her mother had hardly expected her to speak of her fault at all. And then she was such a laggard in the morning that the breakfast-bell had often to be rung twice ere she made her appearance. Grace could not speak, her surprise was so great. She turned and silently embraced her child. Then the young girl said, in so low a tone that it was almost a whisper,

“I know now you were right about the party. I did not think I could have been so wicked.”

So Mary had fought her little battle with herself, and by God’s helping Spirit had conquered. And so the Christian mother had given to her fresh gleanings from the harvest of her hopes.

It was a happy day for both of them. One had learned new lessons of humility, penitence and self-denial; the other had learned a new lesson of trust.



## CHAPTER XII.

*JOHN LEAVES HOME.—HARRY'S APPEAL FOR AID.*

**F**ATHER," said John as he suddenly laid aside his book, "do you not think it is time for me to do something for myself?"

"I had hoped that you would incline to go to college with Arthur," said his father. "I have been thinking a great deal about it of late."

"No, I do not care to go to college," said John. "I am tired of books. I want to go into business. I want to be independent; I want to make money."

"And why are you so anxious to make money?" said his father. "Are you in any special need of it?"

"Oh no," said John. "But it is more in my line than anything else. I should make a very poor sort of professional man, but I shall succeed in business. I know it—I feel it."

Now, John was the one of the Westervelt family who had never given his parents any trouble, and yet, strange to say, he was the least interesting of them all. John never did anything out of the way; but then John never had either pity or sympathy for those who did. John never lost his temper; but then his cool satirical speeches made it almost impossible for any one in his company who had a passionate nature to control it. John always learned his lessons; but he did it without the least glow of interest or enthusiasm. John always took care of himself and had everything that belonged to him always in the right place; but then he was never willing to take one step out of the way to oblige or serve others. So John was the most reliable and the least beloved of all the family. Only to his mother did John give any manifestations of a loving heart. But then she was so loving herself that it was impossible for him to help being gentle and unselfish to her.

Mr. Westervelt took his son's case into consideration. He was disappointed in him, for he had earnestly desired to give his children the benefits of a finished education.

"I have half a mind to make him go to college

whether he inclines to it or not," he said to his wife as they talked the matter over.

"Oh, do not," said Grace. "I think it is a great mistake to force a boy into a life for which he has an utter distaste. I have known so many young men who might have become useful members of society take to idle, dissipated ways just through such a mistaken course on the part of their parents."

"Perhaps you can influence him to be guided by our wishes in the matter, then," suggested her husband.

She shook her head.

"I will try," she said, "but I know John. He never gives up a thing on which he has set his heart."

The event proved that she was right.

So John was placed with a friend who promised to do well by him, and try to make him a successful merchant if he would be steady and industrious. The only trouble was that this friend lived in a distant city, and thus John would be compelled to go from home. This was a source of regret to every one but John himself. He thought it would be much more manly and independent to go out into the world to seek his fortune.

When it came to the parting with his mother he did manifest some emotion, and she was encouraged to reiterate her heart-yearnings for him.

"My son," she said, "I want you to be an earnest Christian. It would not be so hard to send you from me if I were sure that you had this safeguard against the allurements of the world."

"Do not give yourself any uneasiness about that, mother," said John. "I dare say I shall come out all right in the end."

"I want you to be right *now*," she said.

John was complacently looking at the new suit of clothes in which he had attired himself for his journey.

"Well, I guess I am not so very far out of the way," he said, smiling. "I mean to do my duty as well as I know how."

She was not satisfied.

"You promise me that you will read your Bible every day?" she said.

"I always do," he said. "I do not intend to give it up."

"And you will attend church regularly?"

"Of course. It is no more than respectable for a man to go to church on Sunday."

She was almost in despair. How could John be made to feel his need of a Saviour?

Harry, who went to the station with his brother, seemed moody, discouraged and unlike himself.

"You will be the only son at home now," said John. "You must settle down, Harry, and give up your wild ways."

Harry's face flushed, but he said, in a good-natured tone,

"That is easier said than done. My wild ways are a part of me, I believe."

"Pshaw!" said John. "I do not believe in such talk as that. A man is very much what he chooses to make himself. Just make up your mind to a certain course of action and stick to it. That is all."

Harry looked at his well-dressed, self-sufficient brother with a sort of envy.

"I do believe such decision is possible for you," he said. "Well, you are what God made you. It seems to be my fate to 'know the right and still the wrong pursue.'"

"Nonsense! I have no patience with such weakness," said John. "You know the right, and you ought to do it if it were only for mother's

sake. When one of us goes wrong, it almost breaks her heart."

Harry coughed to choke down a sob that came all unbidden. He grasped his brother's hand and wrung it passionately.

"I have half a mind tell you something, John," he said. "I have got myself into a dreadful scrape. Perhaps you, with your clear head, could help me out of it."

"Deliver me!" said John, coldly. "If you are in a scrape, you must get out of it as best you can. You are always running yourself into trouble. I never saw such a fellow. Why don't you keep out of trouble?"

"And I never saw such a cold-hearted stick as you are," cried Harry, in a passion. "You care for no one but yourself. Arthur is worth a dozen of you. I would have been frank with you. I would have been guided by you, but you have refused to help me. Now you can take the consequences. Remember, if trouble comes to them at home, it is partly your fault."

"Don't be in a passion, Harry," said John. "Just listen to reason."

But Harry only cried, "Bother your reason!" and flinging off the detaining hand which his



brother had laid upon his arm, he hurried away and soon disappeared in the crowd.

For once John's calm was somewhat disturbed. He looked after Harry and muttered,

"I wish I had heard what he had to say. I wonder what he is up to?"

A moment he paused in indecision, doubting whether it might not be best to follow Harry even yet and try to help him in his trouble, whatever it might be. But on second thought he decided that it would not be worth while to put himself out.

"Harry has no business to be so weak," he thought. "Let him take the consequences of his own folly. It is no more than he deserves if he has to suffer for it."

So he took his place in the cars, and was rapidly whirled away toward his new home. He lived to repent of that decision. Cold and selfish as was his nature, he lived to shed bitter tears over that lost opportunity. Strong in his moral rectitude, he thought he had no need of a Saviour, but perhaps poor Harry, in his consciousness of wrong-doing and fitful yearnings after a better life, was nearer to the kingdom of heaven than he.



## CHAPTER XIII.

### *MAUDE'S DISAPPOINTMENT.*

**Q**H, Mary, rejoice with me!" cried Maude, drawing her friend out of the hearing of the other girls at the hour of the noon recess. "It is all arranged, and I am so happy that I hardly know what to do with myself."

Mary knew what was coming next, and tried to evade the subject.

"I was so sorry you lost your place in the French class," she said. "You have kept so well ahead in French that I was almost sure you would take the prize this year. And now Minnie Scott will have the most marks."

"That hateful Minnie!" said Maude. "I know she is glad I missed. But I really could not study one of my lessons last evening, I had such work to bring mamma to my way of thinking about the party."

"Why, I thought you told me you had arranged all that before?" said Mary.

"Not at all," said Maude. "I had made up my own mind about it, but I had not got mamma to consent to all my plans by any means. She had promised me a birthday party, but she had no idea that I would insist upon so much style and expense."

"And why did you?" said Mary. "Could you not have quite as good a time without it?"

"No, indeed," said Maude, with a pretty little gesture of disdain. "I would rather have no party at all than have a mean affair. I have that kind of pride that I must have the best of everything. I take it right from mamma. She is just so herself."

"It is well for you that you can have the best, then," said Mary, laughing. "And are you to have the pink silk?"

"I had some trouble about that," said Maude, "but I managed it at last. When I first spoke of it, mamma said it was all nonsense—that my white dress was fresh and new, and that it would do as well as anything I could get. But I cried and cried till tea-time. When I went down to tea, papa asked me what made my eyes so red. Then

I told him just how it was. Well, he happened to be in a very good humor. So he took me in his lap and told me not to cry my pretty eyes out, for I should not be crossed in anything on my birthday. So I kissed him and thanked him and told him all that I wanted, and he consented to everything. That is the way I always manage papa. I can just twist him in any direction that I like if mamma is only out of the way."

"My father is so different," said Mary, with a little sigh. "When I ask him for anything, he is always sure to say, 'Does your mother think you need it?'"

"I should despair if papa took that turn," said Maude. "When mamma came down, she was vexed enough, and I heard her say, when she thought I did not hear, 'The girl is too young for such things. Her head is full of notions already. I shall be able to do no more for her when she has her coming-out party.' But papa said he was rich enough to indulge his children, and he would indulge them if he chose to do it. And he said I was a pretty girl and he liked to see me prettily dressed. So mamma grew reconciled, and now she is as much interested about the party as I am."

"Well," said Mary, quietly, "I am glad that you are satisfied, dear. I hope it will all go well, and that you will have a splendid time."

"Say, rather, that you hope *we* shall have a splendid time," said Maude, gayly. "And now, dear, tell me what you are going to wear. I am not so selfish that I do not care for my friend. I wish you could have a pink silk too. Then we would look like sisters."

Mary knew that the moment which she had been dreading had come.

"Maude," she said, "I hope you will not mind very much, but I cannot come to your party. Mother is quite decided in refusing her consent."

Maude drew herself away with an offended air.

"Oh, well," she said, "if you do not care to come, of course you can suit yourself."

"But I did care very much," said Mary, gently; "I even cried about it. But it was of no use. Mother is always firm about a question of right and wrong. No one can move her."

"But why is it wrong for you to come to my party, I should like to know?" said Maude, angrily. "The sin cannot be very great. Almost every one goes to parties."

“Mother thinks that members of the church ought to be different from other people in such things,” said Mary. “She says that Christians ought not to be conformed to this world.”

“All right; then let her stay at home,” said Maude. “But that is no reason why you should not have a little reasonable pleasure. You have never joined the church.”

“You do not understand,” said Mary, timidly. “I was baptized when I was a baby, and mother says that I am really and truly a member of the church, and that she has pledged herself to see that I am taught to serve God and to renounce the world.”

“How solemn!” said Maude, opening her eyes very wide. “Why, I know ever so many people who have been baptized and do not seem to think anything of it.”

“Mother thinks a great deal of it,” said Mary. “I heard her talking to father about it one night when she thought I was asleep upon the sofa. She said she always tried to order everything in the lives of her children with reference to those baptismal vows, and that she never let one day pass without praying that God would remember his covenant and grant us his salvation. I thought

more about it myself after that than I had done before."

"Well, I am thankful that I have never been baptized, so that I need not worry about it," said Maude, flippantly. "I belong to the world and live in the world, so I mean to enjoy as much of the world as I can."

"Oh, Maude, do not speak so," said Mary, in a tone of real distress. "It seems so wicked."

"Well, I do not care if I am wicked," said Maude. "I do not pretend to be good, and no one expects me to be good. So what does it matter?"

The bell rang and summoned the girls back to the school-room before Mary could reply.

Maude laid her head down upon the desk in front of her and cried silently half through the afternoon, much to the vexation and perplexity of her teachers. Mary could hardly refrain from following her example, yet she could not help feeling glad in her heart that she had been given to God in baptism by loving and trusting Christian parents.

"I should not like to feel that the things that are the most important to my dear father and mother are nothing at all to me," she thought.

"I should not like to have them going on to heaven by themselves and leaving me out in the cold. I would rather never go to a party in my life."

So she went home quite cheerful. But that was not the end of the matter. Maude went home and told her mother that Mrs. Westervelt would not let Mary come to her party. Then she cried about it till Mrs. Clavering promised to take the matter in hand herself. The result of this was quite a stormy interview between the two who had so long been friends. Josie pleaded, ridiculed, coaxed, scolded, but all in vain. At last she grew angry.

"Of course you must do as you like with your own child," she said, "but you do her great injustice. Mary is much too pretty a girl to be brought up like a nun where no one can ever see or admire her."

"I mean to bring her up to be a Christian," said Grace, "so far as my influence goes. For the rest, the orderings of her life are in God's hands, and there I am content to leave them."

"You ridiculous creature!" said Josie. "You take every little thing so seriously. What does a party more or less signify in the long run?"



"That depends upon circumstances," said Grace. "It has sometimes signified the eternal destiny of a soul."

"Well, it is useless to talk to you," said Josie, quickly, and went out.

As she walked toward home she once or twice had occasion to dash away a remorseful tear that dimmed the brightness of her eyes.

"She is bringing Mary up to be a Christian," she thought. "And what am I doing for Maude?"





## CHAPTER XIV.

### *NED'S PLAN ACCEPTED.*

**H**ARRY had desperate thoughts as he turned away from his brother John and mingled with the crowd.

"John despises me," he said. "No wonder; I despise myself. I wonder why I am so different from all the rest of them? Arthur is a real Christian. Every one says that, and every one thinks well of him. John is hateful, but then he never worries them by badness and scrapes as I do. Well, it is my destiny. It is useless to contend against Fate. I wish I could be like Ned Clavering and not care. But I do care. Somehow, whenever I do the least wrong thing, something in my own breast keeps rising up and troubling me. Mother would say that it is my conscience—my God-given monitor to warn me of danger. I wish I did not have any conscience, or else I

wish that I had a comfortable, easy-going sort of conscience like Ned's. He never seems to care for anything so long as he gets his own way."

As Harry turned into Broadway and hurried towards home, with his hands in his pockets and his hat drawn down so far over his eyes as almost to conceal his face, some one caught him by the arm.

"Hey!" cried a voice he well knew; "what is your hurry? Whither are you bound? And why do you look so down in the mouth?"

"Oh, let me alone, Ned Clavering!" said Harry, impatiently. "I am bound for home, and I am desperate. I sometimes wish that I had never seen your face."

Ned did not seem in the least disconcerted by this reception. He passed his hand through his friend's arm and kept pace with him as he said,

"Come, I like that! You would like to go back on your best friend. And why is that, if I may be bold enough to ask the question?"

"Oh, you know well enough, Ned," said Harry, half relenting. "I do not see my way out of this scrape that you have led me into. I dare not tell them at home, and I hate to look them in the face unless I do tell. I feel so mean to take their

love and know that I am deceiving them. I sometimes feel that you are no friend to me at all, but rather my worst enemy."

"Now you talk like a fool, Harry," said Ned. "I your enemy! Why, have we not shared each other's pleasures through thick and thin ever since we were babies? and have I not always stood by you and fought your battles for you?"

"Yes, Ned, you have," said Harry, relenting more and more. "In all this you have been a better friend to me than my own brothers, and you are a good fellow. But then—"

"But then," echoed Ned, with a merry laugh, "we both incline to sow a few wild oats as we go along. And where is the harm?"

"I should think even you would admit that it is wrong for boys like us to play cards and lose money and get into debt," said Harry, savagely.

"Hush!" said Ned. "Don't speak so loud. My own father plays cards, and sometimes he plays for money. I have seen him do it. Why is it any worse for me than for him? As to the losing part, that is bad, I own. But that is our misfortune, not our fault. We meant to win, of course. And in the matter of the debt. That is easily remedied, if our respective parents would

only do their duty by us in the way of pocket-money. I think we are kept dreadfully short for gentlemen's sons."

"Oh, Ned," said Harry, "I do not see how you can say that. Father used always to give me money when I asked him for it till he found he could not trust me, and you have more spending-money than any of the boys."

"What matter for that, so long as I do not have enough?" said Ned. "My father has lots of money. I do not believe that he spends more than half his income."

"Never mind about your father's income," said Harry. "The question is, What are you and I to do about this money that we have borrowed and have promised to pay within a certain time?"

"Truly, my dear fellow, I wish my own mind was as clear on that point as it is on some others," said Ned, carelessly. "The time has been when I could have gone straight to the governor and asked him for it, and he would have forked it over without any fuss. But lately my dear mamma has taken it into her head to be very particular about me. I wish women would mind their own business. She has suggested that I should be required to give in a strict account of the use I

make of my money. Papa took to the suggestion at once, because he said it would give me business habits. Now, all this makes it very awkward for me just now."

"I suppose so," said Harry. "You could not explain about this."

"Well, I could," said Ned, with an expressive shrug of his shoulders, "if I had any particular fancy for being thrashed within an inch of my life. But as I prefer to avoid a collision with my father, I would a little rather not."

"Thrashed!" echoed Harry, in amazement. "I should think you were too big for that."

"I wish you could bring my respected parent to your way of thinking," said Ned, coolly. "He might perhaps agree with you in the abstract, but the trouble is that when he gets his temper up he does not stop to reflect. He generally lets me do as I like; but if he does chance to make a rule and I break it, he is the very—I will not shock you by saying what. Now, upon this subject of getting into debt he has put his foot down. So if he should find out about our card-parties, he would be sure to do something that would be very unpleasant to my feelings."

"Then I do not see what we are to do," said

Harry, moodily. "I came near telling John all about it. He has money, I know, and could help me if he would. He almost always puts his spending-money in the bank. But when I hinted at my trouble, he spoke about it in such a way that I saw it would be of no use."

"John is as cold-blooded as a fish," said Ned. "You might have known it would do no good to appeal to him. It would have been just like him to feel it his duty to bring us to justice."

"I had really made up my mind to turn over a new leaf if John would have helped me out," said Harry. "I am getting about tired of this sort of thing. I never have any peace."

"You should not worry, but learn to take things easy, as I do," said Ned, laughing. "Now, I have thought of a plan that will just suit us both. What do you think of running away and going to sea?"

Harry fairly gasped at the startling proposition.

"Oh, Ned!" he said. "Going to sea! Going to sea!"

"Yes," said Ned. "I think, with you, that New York is about played out. I am tired of mamma's perpetual interference, and I have al-

ways had a fancy that 'a life on the ocean wave' would suit me. What do you think about it, Harry?"

"Why," said Harry, slowly, "I have always longed to go to sea, and I think it would be a good thing to get rid of these fellows that are always after us. But then to run away—to leave them all at home! Oh, Ned, I *never can* do it."

"You can and you must," said Ned. "Or else you must stay here and face the music alone, for I shall go. I have quite decided."

"It would break my mother's heart," said Harry.

"Nonsense!" said Ned. "Hearts do not break so easily. Come in here and have something to eat. It will put a little life into you, and we can talk the matter over."

Harry yielded, but protested that he never could or would agree to Ned's wishes. In a case like his to deliberate was to lose all. Ned did not press the matter till he had ordered a good dinner and Harry had partaken of it. Then he urged him to take wine. At first Harry refused, but finding the temptation too strong for him changed his mind, and soon lost his scruples, his regrets and his timidity.



Ned spoke hopefully of their future. They would go off together to try their fortune, he said. They would see the world. They would make a great deal of money. Then they would come back, pay their debts, and every one would be proud to know them. The picture was a pleasing one to poor unstable Harry. His courage and his spirits rose. His cheeks began to glow and his eyes grew bright.

"I declare, Ned," he said, "I see no other way out. Perhaps, after all, it will be the best thing I can do for them at home just to leave them. I am the only black sheep in the flock. I have been a trouble to them all my life."

"Of course," said Ned. "But you have the right stuff in you, after all. Only get away from here, and you can reform and come back to make them own that, despite all their worries about you, you are the best one in the lot. I always had a fancy for the black sheep. They often turn out the best in the end."

O phantoms of hope! how bright you are as you appear to the young and inexperienced to whisper to them your fair promises or point them to your glowing pictures set in the rose-tinted horizon of the future!

Harry was quite elated at this vision of the triumphs which his friend depicted.

"Ned," he said, with a sort of reckless gayety which always succeeded his more sombre moods, "say no more. I will go with you. I have been a fool to hesitate so long."

"There!" cried Ned, gleefully. "Now you talk like yourself. Now I know you again. Now we can mature our plans at our leisure."

"The sooner we are off, the better," said Harry. "If I am to go, I would rather go at once."

"So I say," replied Ned. "We will get to Boston and ship from there. I know a snug little place where we can board cheap till we can find a berth to suit us."

"I had forgotten about traveling expenses," said Harry, with a rather blank expression. "I have very little money."

"Leave all that to me," said Ned, with a magnificent air. "I will look out for the financials. We will go shares with what I have for the present. You can pay me when you make your fortune."

"All right," said Harry as the boys went out into the street together. "You stand by me and I'll stand by you. It is a bargain."

"United we stand, divided we fall, as the drunken man said to the lamp-post," replied Ned.

They went home in excellent spirits.

The Westervelts had risen from the dinner-table when Harry came in.

"You are late, my son," said his father; "but I will not scold you on the very day that John has left us."

"No, Harry is our only home brother now," said Alice as she went up to him and kissed him. "No one must scold him any more."

"Then I shall be a spoiled child," said Harry, laughing, though something very like a sigh had almost escaped him. "That would never do, Totty." Then, as he saw that his mother was about to touch the bell, he added, hastily,

"Never mind about my dinner, mother. I have dined with a friend."

"Come into the parlor, then," said Mary. "I have some new music, and I want you to hear it."

Harry was very fond of music. He gladly accepted the invitation. Mary played uncommonly well and had quite a sweet voice for singing. As for Alice, she sang like a little bird.

It was a dear delight to Harry to listen to the sweet home music of his sisters. Sometimes he

joined them in singing. On this night he did not feel like it. He threw himself down upon the sofa and shaded his eyes with his hand as he listened.

"Tell me when you are tired, Harry dear," said Mary when she had gone through several pieces.

"I should never be tired," said Harry. "After all, there is no place like home."

A sudden memory touched him and he groaned aloud. Alice went to him, knelt upon the carpet and laid her cheek to his.

"What is the matter, Harry?" she said. "Does your tooth ache?"

Harry put his arm around her and laughed.

"No, Totty," he said. "It is something worse than a toothache."

"Worse!" said the child. "What can be worse?"

"The heartache," said Harry as a shadow came over his face.

"Oh, Harry," said Mary, "what do you know about the heartache? I should think you were the very last one to be troubled with that complaint."

"Well, never mind about me now," said Harry, impatiently. "Go on with your singing."

"I have sung all my new songs," said Mary.

"Well, then, sing some hymns," said Harry.

"Sing *my* hymn—the one that I love."

"I love it too," said Alice. "I always think of Harry when we sing it."

They began the first verse :

"Nearer, my God, to thee."

Harry sprang up and joined them. His voice was full and firm. He sang with great fervor.

Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt came in and listened. They were very happy that night in the happiness of their children. After the singing they all gathered around the fire for a family talk. Harry was the life of the circle. He laughed and talked incessantly. He made even his quiet mother laugh aloud more than once. But when the hour for prayers came, and the big Bible was placed upon the table, the boy was oppressed with a strange sadness. All the light died out of his face. When the father prayed that his children might all be kept in the safe fold, and that the absent ones might not be suffered to fall into temptation, Harry sobbed aloud.

Grace wept silently. Could it be that Harry's wayward heart was touched at last ?

As he rose from his knees Harry came to her side and looked into her face with a loving, wistful gaze which moved her deeply. Then he bent down and kissed her.

"Good-night, dear," she said.

The impulsive boy threw himself upon his knees beside her and clasped both his arms around her as he said, with a sudden burst of emotion,

"Oh, say one thing more. Say 'Good-night, and God bless you, Harry.'"

She stroked his hair gently and repeated the words :

"Good-night; and God bless you, Harry."

Then he sprang up and suddenly left the room.

The girls had gone quietly out. They felt that Harry would rather be alone with his parents.

"Grace," said Theodore as the door closed after Harry, "what does this mean?"

"I hope that another of our sons is beginning to walk in the light," said Grace, smiling.

Alas, poor mother! God's time had not yet come. But the hope gave her one more happy day ere the cruel truth broke upon her in all its bitterness.



## CHAPTER XV.

### *THE PLAN CARRIED OUT.*

**M**Y dear Grace," said Theodosia, coming into her daughter's room fresh from her morning walk, "ought not Harry to be in school at this hour?"

"He is, of course," said Grace. "Why? If you wish to see him particularly, I will send him to you when he comes home."

The aged grandmother looked at her daughter's serene countenance and hesitated, as though she felt it to be her duty to say something which she yet hated to say.

Grace looked at her with some anxiety.

"Why are you so grave and quiet, mother?" she said. "I fear you are tired out. You ought to remember that you are no longer equal to the walks which you used to delight in."

"I have not outwalked my strength this time,"

said Theodosia, "but I have news for you that I know will pain you as it does me. I fear your boy Harry is going wrong."

"Harry!" cried Grace. "Oh, I think you are mistaken. He has been everything at home that was gentle and lovable of late. And it was only last night that his father and I had reason to think that the boy is coming to himself at last. I have never felt so hopeful about Harry as I do now."

"My dear daughter," said Theodosia, "I met Harry not an hour ago in the company of Ned Clavering and another young man whose appearance did not please me. I followed them and saw them go into a drinking-saloon together quite as a matter of course. You may depend upon it that the boy needs looking after. Clarence has been worried about him for some time, and I know that he has talked with him privately. I think he knows things about him that he does not tell me."

Grace had grown very pale while her mother was speaking.

"Are you sure that it was my Harry whom you met?" she said. "Might it not have been some one who resembled him in appearance?"

"I am not so old that I cannot distinguish my own grandson," said Theodosia, with a half-of-



fended air. "If you doubt my word, send a message to the school and request Harry to come home. That will settle the question and satisfy your mind."

"It will not satisfy me at all if Harry is not there," said Grace. "However, I will follow your suggestion, for I must know the truth."

She hastily wrote:

"DEAR HARRY: Please come to me at once. I have a special reason for wishing to see you.

Your loving,

"MOTHER."

This penciled note she gave to the servant, and directed her to take it to the school and give it into Master Harry's own hand. It was not long ere the girl returned almost breathless with the haste she had made, saying,

"Master Harry, ma'am, has not been nigh the school for the past fortnight. And the master gave me a note. Here it is, ma'am."

"You may go, Jane," said Grace, trying to control her emotion in the presence of the servant. But the moment the door had closed she tore open the note and read:

"DEAR MADAM: I am sorry to tell you that your son's conduct during the whole of this term

has been very unsatisfactory to his teachers. I have only refrained from writing to you before because he has promised to do better. Two weeks ago he was so negligent in his classes that I was obliged to reprove him severely. Since then he has not attended school. I supposed that he had absented himself with your permission.

“Yours respectfully, etc.”

Grace read, and her heart sank within her. She did not attempt to move or speak. She felt as if she had received a sudden blow from which she could not rally. If Harry could have seen her then, the whole course of his life would have been changed.

But Harry did not see. He had turned his back upon the home which had sheltered him so many years, and was speeding on his way to Boston as fast as the cars could carry him. The active Ned had perfected his plans with nervous haste as soon as Harry had yielded his consent to them.

When Harry left the house in the morning, he had found Ned waiting for him on the corner, in a state of wild excitement which he had never before exhibited on any occasion.

"Hurry, Harry!" he said. "We must get out of this city as soon as possible."

Harry yielded to the impulse of the stronger will, though he could see no reason for such extreme haste. Keeping out of the more frequented streets, Ned hurried him into an obscure tailor's shop, where he purchased a suit of coarse clothing for himself and his friend. Then he darted hastily into another store, where he furnished himself with two common-looking boys' caps.

"What is this toggery for?" said Harry, laughing.

"It is our disguise," said Ned. "We are no longer to appear to the world as gentlemen's sons till we have made our fortunes. What sea-captain would engage us in this rig that we have on? He would know that we had run away as soon as his eyes rested on us."

"It is just like a novel," cried thoughtless Harry, highly delighted with the idea.

Unfortunately for the plan of taking the cars immediately, they met an acquaintance at this juncture, one of the very fellows to whom they owed money. Jack Grimes at once joined their company, and showed no intention of leaving them. After spending more than half the

morning in his society, Ned hit upon a desperate measure to shake him off. He asked him to accompany them to a drinking-saloon, promising to stand treat for anything that the boys chose to call for.

This was not so unusual a proposition from Ned as to occasion any remark. Jack, who always stood ready to avail himself of any proffered hospitality in this direction, at once accepted. It was as the three boys were on their way to this place that they had been seen by Theodosia in her morning walk. They were so engrossed in their own thoughts and plans that they did not see her, although she followed them some little distance.

Ned was well known in this saloon. He had spent a great deal of money there, and was familiar with all the privileges afforded by the establishment. He entered a small room where there was a private card-table.

"We wish to be by ourselves," he said to the waiter.

"All right, sir," said the waiter, with a respectful bow. "And what will you take, gentlemen?"

"Call for what you like, boys," said Ned, taking

up a pack of cards and looking them over with an indifferent air.

Jack was not slow to avail himself of this permission. He called first for one thing, then for another, till even the waiter smiled significantly as he answered the touch of the little bell which summoned him. At last he threw himself back upon his chair and vowed that he would not drink another drop.

Ned paid the bill, saying to the waiter,

"Now you may leave us to enjoy our game."

Again he busied himself with the cards.

The man went quietly out.

"Come, Jack," said Ned.

Jack rose, staggered to the sofa, and sank down upon it in a heavy sleep.

"He is done for," said Ned, coolly. "He has fallen into the snare. Now, Harry, you and I must change our clothes as quickly as we can and be off."

"And leave poor Jack here in this state?" said Harry, regretfully, as he gazed upon his fallen comrade. "Why, what will become of him? He is drunk."

"That is *his* lookout," said Ned. "If there is any one thing on earth that I am specially thank-

ful for, it is that I am not responsible for Jack Grimes or any of his doings.”

“But you gave him the drink,” said Harry.

“Well, what if I did?” said Ned. “It was the only earthly way of getting rid of him. Hurry up, Harry! We must get into these clothes and get out of this, or it will be the worse for both of us.”

Harry offered no further remonstrance; and when the boys went out of that place with their disordered hair, their coarse, loosely-fitting garments and clumsy headgear, their best friends would have failed to recognize them. To add to the effectiveness of their disguise, Ned had given a few touches of burnt cork to each face, which, being but half rubbed off, quite altered the hue of the complexion.

So they started on their journey into the great outer world, the wicked boy and the weak boy, with no apparent difference between them. Yet one was a child of the covenant, and the other was not. One was followed by countless prayers that had been offered from the very hearts of Christian parents, and the other was not. One was hardened in sin, and the other was constantly resisting the drawings of God’s Spirit within, which

ever prompted him to seek a higher and a better life.

Grace sat with the letter in her hand which told her of her boy's misdeeds till her mother grew frightened.

"Rouse yourself, my dear," she said. "If you can, I wish you would tell me what it is that so troubles you. What has Harry done?"

"I would rather not talk about it," replied Grace. "Or, at least, I will wait till I have seen my husband."

She folded up the letter and put it away. Then she calmly went about her daily duties; but her mother saw that in the expression of her face which told of a grief too deep for tears.

When Theodore had taken his dinner, his wife requested a private interview with him, and told him all. He was hardly less moved than she had been. His third son was a great favorite with him, and had been from his birth.

"I will see him when he comes home to-night," he said. "Perhaps I can influence him to give up his evil courses if I can win his full confidence. And I will take immediate steps for removing him from the companionship of Ned Clavering. It should have been done before. We have been

weak in this matter, my dear. If 'evil communications corrupt good manners,' we ought not to have allowed any considerations to induce us to tolerate them where our boy was concerned. I have been sinfully weak in this."

The hours glided by, but Harry did not come. The girls went to bed saddened and subdued, fearing they knew not what. The parents kept their weary watch together:

The clock struck twelve. Theodore threw himself upon the sofa and dozed as he waited. Grace sank into the depths of the great arm-chair and prayed till she too yielded to the drowsiness that weighed down her eyelids.

The musical little clock on the mantel-piece sounded the hours—one, two, three, four, five. Then both of the unhappy parents started from their uneasy slumbers with faces which looked almost ghastly in the gray light of the early dawn.

"What can this mean?" cried the father. "Harry never before served us thus."

The mother only replied by a burst of hysterical weeping.

"I will go at once to the Claverings," said Theodore. "He may have stayed there all night."

Grace eagerly caught at the suggestion.



"Of course he has," she said. "They have been out late, Harry has been afraid to come home, and Ned has offered him a bed. Why didn't we think of it before?"





## CHAPTER XVI.

### *FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS.*

**A**LL was quiet at the Claverings. The heads of the house slept late, and the servants were not at all averse to prolonging their own morning slumbers when they knew that no one was awake to look after them. Josie had been to a party the night before, and was in a deep sleep. Mr. Clavering had dined with some friends, and had been detained till very late, so he had thrown himself upon a sofa in his dressing room without removing his clothes. The cook was just coming down the stairs with a stealthy step, knowing that she was behind her time, when a quick, startling peal of the door-bell reverberated through the house.

“Goodness gracious!” cried the cook. Then she hurried down, muttering,

"If that blessed milkman is ringing at the front door-bell in that style, he may look out for his walking ticket, and I shall just tell him so."

As she threw open the door, all primed with the scolding that she had prepared for the delinquent, she confronted Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt.

"Goodness gracious!" she ejaculated again. "Callers at this hour! Why, the mistress is not out of her bed."

"You need not disturb your mistress," said Mr. Westervelt, making his way into the parlor. "My business is with Master Ned."

"Master Ned!" said the girl. "Sure, and he's the laziest one in the house. But I will speak to him. It will be a good thing to get him up to his breakfast for once."

She hurried up stairs, but soon returned to say that Master Ned had not slept in his bed at all, and that Mr. Clavering would be down in a moment.

Almost as she spoke Mr. Clavering came in, looking somewhat disturbed.

"Has anything happened to that boy of mine that you are asking about him at this early hour?" he said. "I find that the young scamp has not been in at all last night. He often stays out very



The Alarm.



late, but it is seldom that he makes a night of it. Has he been up to any mischief?"

"I did not come to tell you about your boy, but to ask about my own," said Mr. Westervelt. "Harry did not come home last night, and he was seen with Ned yesterday. I hoped I might find him here."

"It is very strange," said Mr. Clavering. "I will ask my wife if Ned said anything to her."

He hurried up stairs again. Presently there was a great commotion and excitement, in the midst of which Mrs. Clavering's maid came down to summon Grace to the apartment of her mistress.

Josie had hastily thrown on her wrapper and gathered her hair loosely into a coil at the back of her head. As Grace entered the room she threw herself into her arms, sobbing violently.

Grace returned her embrace, but could not speak.

"Oh, Grace," said Josie, "my boy, my unhappy boy! He has ruined himself for ever!"

"Harry!" cried Grace. "Tell me of Harry!"

"Harry is with him," said Josie. "They have run away from home to go to sea. But that is not the worst of it. Ned has forced open his father's

private drawer, and has taken from it five hundred dollars."

"Five hundred dollars!" echoed Grace, in dismay.

"Yes; Mr. Clavering brought it home for me at my request. Ned knew that the money was in the house. He knows where his father keeps his money, and has taken it. Oh, how could he be so base? To rob his own father!"

Mr. Clavering came in from his dressing-room, with his hat and overcoat on, evidently full of angry resolve. He looked very dark and stern and unrelenting.

"I will speak to your husband about this disgraceful business as I go out, Mrs. Westervelt," he said.

"Oh, my husband," said Josie, laying her hand upon his arm, "what are you about to do?"

"I go to set the detectives upon their track," he said, bitterly. "The young scamps! I will make them suffer for this. They need not hope to escape me."

He flung off her detaining grasp and went out. Grace sank fainting to the floor. When she came to her senses, her friend and her husband were bending over her applying all the restoratives at

their command. She started wildly up with the question,

"Has he gone to do it? Will nothing stop him?"

Josie was about to reply, but a gesture from Theodore stopped her.

"My dear," he said, "let us go home. Mr. Clavering will, of course, take measures to bring the boys back. You must get some rest that you may be ready to receive Harry when he comes."

The unhappy mother caught at the suggestion.

"Oh yes," she said. "We will give him a loving welcome. Remember the prodigal son. We will not be hard on our Harry."

Mr. Westervelt hurried her to the carriage, which he had already ordered. He was alarmed by her appearance, and feared the consequences of any more excitement for her. On the way home he spoke to her hopefully and cheerfully, although his heart ached with its burden of sorrow. He had the satisfaction of seeing her safely to her own room, and prevailed upon her to take an opiate, under the influence of which she soon slept.

Then he went to tell the girls what had hap-



pened. Mary took it quietly, though she evidently felt it deeply. Totty made a great outcry.

"Oh, father," she said, "will Harry be called a thief? Will he be taken to prison?"

"Hush, Alice!" said Mary. "Of course not. Harry had nothing to do with taking the money."

"Let us hope so," said the father, wearily. "Keep the house quiet. Your mother must not be disturbed. If she wakes and asks for me, tell her I have gone to find Harry. Totty, you must not see her at all unless you can be quiet and try to comfort her."

All through the day the search for the boys went on, but with no success.

Mr. Clavering stormed, threatened and almost raved, but his son was beyond the reach of his words. Mrs. Clavering wept till she was really ill, but her grief was unavailing.

The detectives spoke fair promises, but they evidently had no clue to the fugitives.

So the days went on.

Theodore began to give up all hope. Grace became alarmingly ill. It was a sad household. Arthur and John were sent for to see their mother die. Then John told of Harry's appeal to him.

"Oh, my son," said his father, "if you could

only have given your brother your sympathy, how much trouble you might have saved us all!"

"You cannot blame me more than I blame myself," said John; and he bowed his head till his face rested upon the foot of his mother's bed, where he wept bitterly.

But Grace did not die. To the surprise of every one, she rallied and came slowly back to the realization of all that had befallen her. Her husband was watching by her side as she slept, when suddenly she startled him by saying, in a firm, clear tone,

"Theodore, I will never give him up."

"Of whom do you speak, my dear?" he replied, for he could hardly believe her to be fully conscious, and wished to fall in with her mood, whatever it might be.

"Of Harry," she said. "Of whom can I be thinking or speaking but Harry?"

She spoke as naturally as though she had taken up a theme but lately dropped. Her husband, however, could not forget the long days of illness which had threatened her very life. The introduction of so exciting a subject alarmed him greatly.

"Do not let us talk of Harry now, dear," he said, soothingly.

"Why not?" she said, fixing her great shining eyes on his face with a look of wonder. "It has been a sore struggle, but I have given him up to God. I feel that Harry will be brought back to me. I feel that he will be saved. I *cling* to that *covenant* and our covenant-keeping God."

She folded her hands, and seemed to be praying.

Her husband threw himself upon his knees and prayed with her, while from his whole soul went forth a fervent thanksgiving for the life which had been spared to him.





## CHAPTER XVII.

### *MARY CHOOSES FOR HERSELF.*

**T**HE truant did not return. Arthur and John went back to their duties, and the mother regained her health. Soon she was able to take her place in the family once more, but it was a saddened household. There was ever in every heart a sense of loss and of pain; a shadow of suspense brooded over them all. The father and mother were hardly conscious of the change which had taken place in their looks and manner since Harry left them, but the girls were very conscious of it, and began to droop under it.

Totty was the first one that brought the fact fully before them. Grace had been sleeping on a sofa in the library, when she was awakened by strains of music in the adjoining room. It was Mary playing some plaintive airs which she had lately been learning. The music suited well with

Grace's mood, and she lay there listening in a sort of dreamy content, when Alice came in.

"Oh, do not play those sad tunes, Mary," she said. "Play something lively. You know lots of pieces that I like."

"Hush, Totty!" said Mary. "These suit me best. I do not touch my lively music any more."

"Why not?" said Alice, impatiently. "Mother is not sick now."

"But she is very sad," said Mary, "and so is father. I do not think they will ever be bright and happy again. They think about Harry all the time."

"Then I think it is too bad," said Totty. "I used to think we had the best home in the world, but now I wish that I lived somewhere else. So there!"

"Why, Totty Westervelt!" said Mary. "I should think you would be ashamed of yourself to talk so."

"I'm not one bit ashamed," said Totty. "We have horrid times. I do not see why we should never have any more fun in our lives just because Harry chose to act badly. You and I have tried to be good."

The mother heard and began to reflect. Had

she unconsciously been blighting these young lives by the indulgence of her own sorrow? She determined that it should be so no longer. That evening she came down to the tea-table with a cheerful smile, and drew Alice on to tell of some of her school experiences, till even the grave father was beguiled into a merry laugh. When tea was over, she proposed music.

"Play something lively, Mary," she said. "I should really like to hear you and Totty sing some of your songs. I have not heard them for a long time."

Mary looked up in surprise, noticed the change in her mother's face and manner, and gladly complied. From that time the clouds of gloom and melancholy began to depart. Cheery sunbeams broke through the darker shades, and soon the harmony of their life seemed fully restored.

The intimacy of the Westervelts with the Claverings was broken up. Mr. Clavering persisted in throwing the blame of Ned's misconduct upon Harry, and grew cold and distant in his bearing to the whole Westervelt family. He had forbidden his son's name to be mentioned in his presence, and he hated the sight of any one who brought him forcibly to his mind. Mrs. Claver-

ing longed to give up the gay society, which had become odious to her as soon as she felt the pressure of a real heart-sorrow, but the gilded chains were about her and she could not break them.

Mr. Clavering dearly loved his wife, and in most things he was very indulgent. Jewels, gay dresses and luxuries he lavished upon her; household duties he never required of her; but he did require her to entertain a great deal of company, and to preside over such entertainments with spirit and ease. He lived for society; quiet he could not endure, and monotony was intolerable to him. He never spoke of his son, but he allowed the impression to go abroad that Ned was traveling with his consent. He commanded his wife and daughters so to act as to confirm that impression, and forbade all future intimacy between the young people of his own family and the Westervelts.

Mrs. Clavering hid her aching heart under her gay demeanor, and was envied by many of her acquaintances as a woman who knew not a care. Grace almost ceased to visit her.

But often in the twilight the weary woman of fashion stole away to pass an hour with her early friend in mourning over her lost boy, in deploring her neglect of him, and in praying for him. Al-

most by stealth she was drawing nearer to God and beginning to feel the utter worthlessness of the husks with which she had been trying to feed her soul.

Grace loved her friend as warmly as ever, but she did not deplore Mr. Clavering's unreasonable conduct as deeply as she might have done had she not seen a marked improvement in Mary since Maude Clavering had renounced her friendship.

Mary was not inclined to be either vain or frivolous. She had a fine mind and was very happy in her home pursuits, but she had greatly admired the beautiful, sprightly Maude, and when in her company was often led to sigh for forbidden pleasures. She was gay and social, and not always discreet. But Harry's misconduct had been a great shock to her, anxiety for her mother had still more effectually sobered her, and Maude's utter lack of sympathy had both grieved and disappointed her.

At this time Mary was peculiarly sensitive to religious impressions, and every sermon that she heard seemed to go directly to her heart. She began to long for a new and deeper experience of the religion which she had always believed in, although she had never earnestly sought it for her-



self. One morning her mother found her with an open Bible before her silently weeping. She sat down beside her and threw one arm around her as she said,

“What is your trouble, my dear? Can I help you?”

Mary pointed to the passage which she had been reading. It was the account of our Lord’s last supper with his disciples.

“Christ said, ‘Do this in remembrance of me,’” she whispered. “I long to obey him. I feel dreadfully whenever I turn away from that communion, but I cannot partake of it.”

“And what hinders you, my child?” said Grace, gently.

“I know that I am not fit,” said Mary. “The Bible says, ‘Ye must be born again,’ and the minister often says that one who would be a Christian must have ‘a change of heart.’ Now, I am afraid that I have never had this change, and I am trying to get it, but I do not know how. I am almost discouraged about myself.”

“And how do you expect to feel when you have this change of heart?” said Grace.

“Oh, I hardly know myself,” said Mary. “I heard a man in one of the evening meetings de-

scribe it. He said he felt that he was lost, and that only Christ could save him, but he hated God and would not submit. Then he was in a great agony and could neither eat nor sleep. At last he began to pray, and then he felt a great joy in his soul. Everything in the world looked bright to him because he was so happy, and from that time he has been quite changed. He loves to read his Bible and he loves to pray. I suppose I must feel something like that."

"Yes, I suppose you must," said her mother. "You must feel that in Christ is your only hope, that in yourself there is no good thing, that you cannot even have one good thought unless the Holy Spirit whispers it to your soul."

"Why, of course; I know that," said Mary. "You taught me all that long ago. The Bible teaches it too, so of course it is true."

"Then you are convinced that you are a sinner, that you need Christ as a Saviour, and that you must have the help of the Holy Spirit in all your attempts to serve him?" said her mother.

"Why, yes," said Mary, thoughtfully. "It seems to me that I have believed that all my life, only I have never thought much about it till lately."

"Then I do not see but that you have the same conviction of sin that the man had," said her mother.

"But I have not had any great agony," said Mary, with tears in her eyes. "I have tried and tried, but I cannot feel so. And I do not hate God at all. The more I think about it, the more it seems to me that I truly love him."

"Mary," said her mother, "if you thought that only Jesus could save you, and if you believed that he would not do it, would you not be in an agony of fear then? Or if you had fully determined that you could not or would not let him save you, would you not be in an agony then?"

"I suppose I should," said Mary. "But I cannot feel that, because Jesus has said, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out,' and I *want* him to save me above all things. It seems to me that I can never be happy until he has forgiven my sins."

"Then why will you not believe his own word when he tells you that he has forgiven them?" said her mother. "'God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being *now* justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.'

Notice Paul's expression: We are *now justified* BY HIS BLOOD, not by anything that we have done or can do—not by anything that *we feel* or *can feel*."

"But, mother," said Mary, "that is written to Christians."

"And who are Christians?" said her mother. "I should say those who just take Christ at his word, who believe that he died for sinners, that he has saved them from their sins, and who strive to follow him."

"Is that all?" said Mary. "But the change of heart? the great joy?"

"If you really desire to serve Christ, if your heart acknowledges him as your Lord and Master, if you are ready to obey his commandments from this time forward, and to follow the guidance of his Spirit wherever he may lead you, you must have had a change of heart, whether you know the exact time when the change took place or not," said her mother. "As to the joy, I would not be too anxious about that. Only take care to do the will of God, only believe in Jesus, and the joy will be sure to come. Perhaps it may not in your case be quite such as the man described. Experiences vary greatly. With you it may be as a sweet

peace which is quiet and calm, though 'deep as the soundless sea.' "

Mary fixed her eyes upon the book before her, and seemed lost in thought. For some moments she neither moved nor spoke. Her mother would not break that silence, but she was inwardly communing with that Spirit who had long been her guide, pleading for her child. At length Mary turned her glance upon her mother's face, and said, timidly,

"Mother, if that is all, I trust—I believe—that I am a Christian now."

"I believe that you are," said her mother. "The Bible test is very plain: 'As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.' From what you tell me, my daughter, I think that you have begun to yield yourself to the guidance of that Spirit."

Again Mary gave herself up to a reverie, in which she seemed to be examining her own heart. Then, with a sudden brightening of her expressive face, she laid her head upon her mother's shoulder.

"Oh, I *do* believe," she said; "and, mother, I am beginning to feel a little of the joy."

It was even so. The child of the covenant

had from the very first moment of her own consciousness been under the gracious influences of the Spirit. Always believing what the Bible taught her of God, sometimes resisting, sometimes yielding to the impulse which led her to him, she had gone on till the great change had been wrought within her, and the God of her father was the firm choice of her own soul.

From that time when the eyes of her understanding were opened to see the light she walked in the light. It was a happy moment for both of the parents, who had so solemnly dedicated their child to God in her infancy, when this daughter of their love, seated by their side, received those sacred pledges by which Christ has ordained that his followers shall keep his sufferings and death ever in remembrance.





## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.*

**T**HERE were changes in the household. Totty, the baby, was beginning to be quite a young lady, and spurned the pet name in which she had once delighted. Mary had left school, and had gathered about her quite a circle of congenial friends. Arthur had graduated as a college student, and was studying for the ministry—a profession on which he had set his heart, to the great joy of his parents. John was doing well; he had laid up money, and was thinking of starting in business for himself.

Harry had never been heard from, and was seldom mentioned. He had gone down from among them, and the waters of oblivion had closed over him. There was now scarcely a ripple upon the surface to call to mind the active, merry boy who had once been not only the disturbing ele-

ment, but the life and the soul, of their family circle.

Mary was in the garden training up some vines with her father's assistance. Her mother stood beside them, alternately offering suggestions and admiring their work. Alice was setting out some roses and pinks in the bed which was her own peculiar care. The air was balmy and fragrant with the breath of flowers. The setting sun gilded the whole scene with his parting beams and made it radiant in beauty. They were all so happy as scarcely to be conscious of the extent of their own happiness, when they were startled by a loud, shrill scream from a maid-servant who was opening the parlor windows. They looked up with one accord, and saw her wringing her hands as she cried out,

“It is a drunken man! He has come to murder us!”

Almost at the same moment the figure of a man came down the garden walk. Such a figure! tall, slender and slightly bent, though not by age, with long, rough, brown hair, with a face sunburnt though far from rough or repellent, with a beard that had not known the touch of a razor for weeks, with coarse garments, and a dark blue



cap without a visor, gathered in at the top of the head by a large brass button.

Alice screamed aloud at the sight of him, while Mary uttered an exclamation of fear and drew closer to her sister.

Mr. Westervelt advanced to meet the intruder, demanding, angrily,

“What do you want here, sir?”

The man paused, and then said, in weak quavering tones,

“Do you not know me, father?”

Ere any one could seem fully to take in the meaning of these words there was a sudden cry:

“It is Harry, my son! He has come back!” And in another moment the mother and son were clasped in each other’s arms.

Oh, there was great joy in the Westervelt family that night! Harry had come back—weak, wandering, erring Harry had come back.

What mattered it that he came in poverty and wretchedness? What mattered it that he had sinned against much love, had wandered far and long, and had wrung their very hearts? He had come back! After many years his heart had turned to them once more, and had led him home.

Oh, if there can be such joy as this in an earth-

ly home over a penitent child, why should we doubt that there is indeed joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth? Oh, if there can be such forgiving love on earth, why should we doubt that there is forgiveness with God when the poor lost souls for whom Christ died would fain turn back from their wanderings and go home to seek their Father and their Friend?

Not a word of reproach, not a word of blame, was there for the loved one who had come home. In the first glow of the welcome all unpleasant recollections were unnoticed. But as the excitement of the moment passed away it became evident to them all that there was still room for anxiety about Harry, though from a different cause. The bent form, the languor which was not natural to him, the constant hacking cough, were symptoms which could not be overlooked.

Medical aid was summoned; and after a thorough examination of the young man's condition, the doctor announced that he had not long to live. The father refused to believe it. "Harry has an excellent constitution," he said. "He has been imprudent, and is feeling the effects of it. With care, rest and nourishing food he will recover his health."

The doctor shook his head, and said as he turned sadly away from that look which was half assertion, half entreaty,

"I cannot deceive you, Mr. Westervelt. Your son had an excellent constitution, but he has tampered with it too long. He has thrown his life away. He may last for some time, with nursing, but cannot recover."

From that hour Harry became the centre of the household. The one who suffered was the one who was held most dear. All vied with each other in administering to his comfort.

The love and the suffering softened and subdued him. Harry was changed, clothed and in his right mind; the delicate invalid was so patient, so chastened in his tastes, so different from the wild, troublesome boy, that no could have helped loving him. Only the bright, merry humor, the ready wit, remained. These were a part of Harry's very self that even pain and weakness could not conquer. Of his wanderings he seldom spoke, and only to his mother did he tell the whole story of those weary years of sin and sorrow—how he had almost died of homesickness the very first week he went away; how his heart had failed him and he had been on the point of giving it all up;

how angry Ned Clavering was, and how at last he had said,

“Harry, we *cannot* go back, unless we go to prison and to disgrace. I have taken a great deal of money from my father, and no one will ever believe that you did not have some hand in the theft. I never meant to tell you this, and would not if you had not shown the white feather at the very start. We have burned the bridge behind us ; we *must* go on.”

Then Harry grew desperate. He thought he had lost his good name, he was branded as a thief, he did not care what became of him, he never wanted to see his mother and the girls again.

So he fell into all Ned's foolish plans without any more resistance. They had met with many adventures. Sometimes they had good luck, sometimes they were brought very low, but they always had held together and shared each other's fortunes. At last they fell in with a gang of sharpers, who taught Ned many tricks by which he could win money, and in which Harry would not join. Then Ned began to grow distant with him and to keep secrets from him. Finally, Harry took cold and had a low fever which brought him to death's door. Then Ned went away with his

new friends and left the old one to his fate. Harry thought he should have died alone, in a strange land, if a poor woman in the house where he boarded had not taken compassion on him and nursed him through his illness.

Then he told hōw he lay upon that sick-bed and thought about his home till the yearning for it grew so strong that he made up his mind that he would try to go back even if he died in the attempt. All this he told to the sympathizing listener who sat beside him with his hand clasped in hers.

When he had ended, he saw that she was silently weeping.

"Oh, mother," said Harry, "I never went so far away or sinned so deeply that I did not remember how you loved me; and I always knew that you and my father were praying for me. It was that thought which helped to bring me back, I think. It seemed as if there were cords in my heart which ever kept drawing me to you."

"And did you forget the higher love which kept you through it all?" said his mother, gently.

Harry shut his eyes, but a great tear forced its way from beneath his closed eyelids as he said,

"No, mother, I could not forget. I tried and tried, and Ned laughed at me, but it was all of no use. The words of the prayers that you taught me when I was almost a baby kept coming into my mind, and I often wished that I could kneel at your side and say them as I used to do."

His mother hid her face upon his pillow and sobbed aloud. She hardly knew whether she wept for joy or sorrow. Her labor had not been in vain, and yet her Harry, dearer now than ever before, was doomed to die.

Harry gently pressed the hand which clasped his own. "I know why you cry so, mother," he said, in a low tone; "my life is going, and all your medicines do me no good. But never mind; it is better so."

"Better so!" said his mother, startled to find that he was so well aware of his own danger. "Harry, what do you mean?"

"I mean that I do not dare to get well," said Harry. "I want to do right, but I am afraid to trust myself. I am so weak that I am afraid I might fall back into the old habits."

"Jesus can keep you if you only trust him," said his mother. "He has broken the power of sin and of death and of hell."

"Yes, I know," said Harry, wearily; "but I am so tired and so weak. I long for rest. Do you remember my favorite hymn, mother? I have often sung it, and sometimes I have thought it was a prayer with me. 'Nearer, my God, to thee!' My prayer will soon be answered."

"Harry," said his mother, "are you trusting in Jesus as your Saviour?"

"Oh yes," replied Harry, in a tone of touching humility. "If he died for sinners, he surely died for me. No one could be much worse than I have been."

Even in that trying moment the mother's heart thrilled with joy at these words. God had been true to his covenant; he had redeemed the soul which she had committed to him in faith. The Spirit had wrought in him faith in Christ. Even from the bedside of her dying son she sent up a fervent thanksgiving for this supreme mercy.

Harry lingered a few weeks, but he daily grew weaker. One night as they were all gathered in his room he begged them to sing his favorite hymn together. They complied, though every now and then a perceptible tremor in the voices of the girls told that the task was almost too much for them. In the last chorus the tenor voice once more

blended with theirs, and continued firm and clear to the end.

After the singing Harry seemed so weary that they all silently kissed him and went out. All except his mother. She never left him. To minister to his comfort was now her dearest earthly delight. As she arranged his pillows she heard him whisper,

"Oh what a Saviour! He saved the thief on the cross! He has saved *even me!*"

She bent down and kissed him. He smiled upon her with a look of childlike love.

"Pray with me, mother," he said, "as you used to do when I was a little boy."

She sank on her knees and poured out her heart in prayer. When the prayer was ended, he said,

"Thank you, mother. Now put your hand upon my head and say, 'God bless you, Harry.' You said it the night before I went away. Don't you remember?"

His tones were very faint and low. She thought he was sinking to sleep.

Very tenderly she laid her hand upon his forehead, very fervently she uttered the words,

"God bless you, Harry!"



Again he lifted his eyes to hers with that bright, unearthly smile. Then there was a sudden gasp for breath, and the light faded from his face.

Poor weak, erring Harry was at rest. His sorrows, his temptations, his struggles, were overpast.





## CHAPTER XIX.

### *DR. GRAHAM'S BIRTHDAY.*

**W**HAT a pleasant scene!" said Dr. Graham as he entered the parlor where he was always sure of a welcome.

It was indeed a pleasant scene. They were all there, prosperous, well and happy—yes, happy, although there was one vacant place in the home circle. The memory of their loss was now not only mellowed by time, but brightened by the assured hope that in the beautiful home above the loved one awaited their coming.

There was the honored father, hardly past his prime, as vigorous, as energetic and as social as he had ever been.

There was the gentle mother, with her soft gray hair half concealed by the pretty lace cap, with the glow of health upon her cheek and a sweet peace written on her still lovely face.

There was Arthur, the first born and the first who had been gathered into the kingdom of God, a minister, happy and blessed in his work. He was large in stature, with an expansive brow and a rather thoughtful face. The fiery temper was now seldom seen, but the fiery eloquence which was born of the fervent spirit so thrilled men's hearts that few could hear the young preacher without emotion.

There was Arthur's wife, a young matron in her first bloom, pretty and graceful, shy yet tender, and evidently convinced that her husband and her two little ones were the most interesting beings that the world had ever seen.

There was John, the man of business and the man of wealth, commended by all who knew him, always well dressed, faithful in all his undertakings, always a gentleman, very little changed in character and not greatly changed in appearance.

There was John's bride, dressy, flippant and coquettish. Rumor said that John had married for money. He certainly was not a very devoted husband, although he treated his lady with courtesy and was attentive to all her wants.

There was Mary, as sprightly and entertaining as when we first knew her, but now developed

into womanhood and exerting a happy influence over a large circle of friends.

There was the young man to whom Mary was to be married in the spring, as much at home among them as if he had always been a member of the family.

There was Miss Alice, girlish, very light hearted, very bewitching. And there was a young college student who seemed to think so. I do not know that he was an invited guest on this occasion, but somehow he had happened in, and no one seemed sorry to see him. Indeed, Miss Alice took special pains to see that he was not overlooked.

Oh yes, it was a pleasant scene, and they were a beautiful group. Well might the good doctor look upon them with a complacent smile as they surrounded him with loving greetings and words of heartfelt congratulations. Well might he feel specially honored as he seated himself in the chair of state, which had been reserved for him, for it was the doctor's eightieth birthday, and it was to celebrate that event that the family party was given.

Dear old Doctor Graham! He seemed to the children who had grown up under his care almost like a second father. Many a word of gentle ad-

monition had come to them from his lips. Many a time had he helped them through trial or doubt. They all loved him and they all revered him in the serene beauty of his peaceful old age.

A well-appointed dinner was served, and the doctor asked that the blessing of God might rest upon that house, in tones which trembled with feeling. The young people grew merry as the dinner proceeded and the laugh and the joke went round. The old folks sympathized in the fun, and the doctor joined in it as heartily as any of the rest.

After dinner there was a familiar talk among the brothers and sisters, who now had separate interests and different pursuits. Then there was a call for music, originating with the young student who had no business to be there at all. His proposition was warmly seconded, and the music began. At first only Alice and the student sang, but gradually the whole company gathered about the piano, so that only Dr. Graham and Mr. and Mrs. Westervelt lingered in the parlor, where they had first assembled.

The doctor looked in upon the pretty domestic picture with a genial smile.

"Truly, Mrs. Westervelt, you are a happy

woman to be mother of such a family as that," he said.

Mr. Westervelt laughed as he said, "I see you know how to please my wife, doctor. You have only to praise those children of hers, and you are sure to be a favorite."

"Dr. Graham has long been a favorite on his own account," said Mrs. Westervelt, smiling. "But I will not deny that I am proud of my children."

"You may well be proud of them," said the doctor. "I take some pride in them myself. I baptized them all, you know. That gives me a sort of right in them."

"Ah, yes, you baptized them all," said the mother, reflectively. "Well do I remember how kindly you instructed us about covenant privileges and covenant blessings on that night so long ago. I have thanked you for it all my life."

"You have not found that their baptism was an empty form, then?" said the doctor.

"No, indeed," was the reply. "It has strengthened and helped me in every way. When they were little and wrong dispositions began to come out in them, I believed that God could overcome where I could only restrain, and I also felt that he

was pledged to do it. As they grew older and longed for forbidden pleasures, I might have yielded to their desires if I had not seen that in so doing I should break my baptismal vows. And when Harry went away, I should have lost all hope if I had not been able to cling to that covenant. It has always seemed to me, in all my dealings with these children, that they have been subject to peculiar spiritual influences even from their first consciousness."

"I feel at ease about them all but John," said Mr. Westervelt. "Arthur is a growing Christian; Harry died in the faith; Mary is very much in earnest in all Christian service; even our light-hearted Alice gives evidence that she has had a change of heart; only John resists the influences that would lead him to seek God."

"John puzzles me," said Dr. Graham. "He seems so excellent in everything but this one thing. He is so particular in the outward observance of religious duty; he has such strict ideas of honor and morality; he is so upright in all his dealings with men. Strange that he should stand without when he seems so near to heaven!"

"He says he is better than half the Christians now," continued Mr. Westervelt. "He has a

great deal to say about the inconsistency of church members."

"That is a bad sign," said Dr. Graham, gravely. "His worldly prosperity has been a snare to him. Everything that he touches seems to turn into gold. I sometimes think it would have been better for John's soul if he had had a few failures."

"He is so conscious of the rectitude of his conduct that he seems unconscious of his need of a Saviour," said Mr. Westervelt. "That is his difficulty. Strange that he cannot see that in withholding his love and service from the God to whom he owes all he has and is he commits sin! He that sins against great love and mercy has sometimes seemed to me the worst sinner of all. I get almost discouraged about John, yet I cannot give him up."

"I will *never* give him up," said the mother, firmly. "When God has owned and blessed his covenant in the case of all our other children, why should we begin to doubt him now? Let us cling to our faith; let us hold on in prayer; and when God's chosen time has come, John will be brought into the spiritual fold. I may not live to see it, it may not be in the way that I would



choose, but I feel an assurance in my soul that John will be saved at last."

"According to your faith be it unto you," said Dr. Graham, fervently. And the words, on the lips of the aged saint, were at once a prayer and a benediction.

For a few moments the little circle sat in solemn stillness. The silence was broken by Grace:

"Dr. Graham, those words, 'according to your faith be it unto you,' seem to me to utter a reproach as well as a promise. According to our faith, in its littleness as well as in its strength, we may receive. Had my faith risen higher, my blessings, mayhap, had been greater."

"That I do not question," Dr. Graham replied; "but let me ask on what your thoughts are now turning."

"On this," said Grace: "My faith, in the earlier years of our married life, laid hold upon the covenant of God as assuring me that the offering of our children would *at some time* be honored of God in their conversion. In this faith Theodore has been one with me. But in later years I have been led to ask myself whether our expectations had not fallen short of God's willingness to bless.

Should we not have looked with expectant faith for the renewing influences of the Holy Spirit to be exerted upon our children before they were old enough to exhibit impenitency? Should we not have believed, prayed, acted, in accordance with this expectation? And if we had thus believed and thus behaved, might we not have been spared some of the sorrows that have wrung our hearts? Might not all of our flock *now* be manifestly within the fold?"

"Dr. Graham," cried Theodore, earnestly, "Grace is right. Where I should have led, I have lagged behind her. Her trust has been more true in itself and more true in its outworkings than mine. The blessings which have come to us are to be traced to her fidelity and faith rather than to mine. Had I my life to live over, I should seek to be more true to my trust as a father; I should aim to enfold my boys' lives in my own—to enter into their aims, sorrows, hopes, fears, so fully that they should come to me in trouble or gladness with perfect confidence. But beyond this I should wish that my faith might be, not for their conversion on reaching years of maturity, but for their growing up from infancy in the love of God, and their entering into the full communion of the

church on attaining years of discretion. God has honored our small faith. He has blessed us beyond our deserts and beyond our faith. Would that my faith, at least, had been wiser and firmer! But the past is past. We will now trust and await."





## CHAPTER XX.

### *THE MINISTER AND THE MILLIONAIRE.*

**T** was a luxuriously furnished room in one of the most costly and elegant mansions in the city. Rare paintings adorned the walls; a heavy Axminster carpet covered the floor. Wealth had done all that wealth could do to beautify this home and keep out care and sorrow.

Before the blazing fire sat two men somewhat past their prime in earnest conversation. One had a thoughtful yet peaceful expression of countenance, which seemed to speak of a mind at rest in its content, though ever busy. The other looked haggard and troubled. Heavy lines were on his brow, his lips were compressed as if through the constant habit of heart repression, and his eyes were slightly bloodshot, as the effect of poring over ledgers, and sleepless nights.

Neither of them seemed to heed the comforts by which they were surrounded, nor to take pleasure in them, so absorbed were they in the subject of their talk.

"You tell me that it is all gone, John?" said the elder as the other paused after a long and earnest statement in regard to the matters under discussion.

"All," said the other, briefly.

His manner was calm and constrained, but his accents were those of despair.

"My dear brother!" The words were commonplace enough, but there was any amount of sympathy and love in the voice and manner of the speaker. The stern face began to work convulsively. The heart that had striven to harden itself to endurance melted at the touch of love.

"Oh, Arthur," cried John, "it is hard—it is hard! The fruits of all my toil through years swept away in a day! And it is not my fault. Who could have foreseen this panic, which has shaken the very foundations that seemed most secure?"

"No one can blame you," said Arthur. "Every one knows that you have sound judgment and a cool head."

"My head is far from cool now," said John. "My very brain seems on fire. I hardly know which way to turn."

"You will have enough to free yourself from debt," said Arthur, kindly. "There is comfort in that thought."

"Yes, I shall owe no man a penny," said John. "I shall be spared the pain and disgrace of wronging those who have trusted me. But what is to become of my family? I have to begin again without capital and work my way up. Oh, it is very hard to bear. I sometimes think that I would be glad to die and so end it all."

"Oh, John, do not say that," said Arthur, sadly. "That would be a dreadful way out of it, to lose your soul because you have lost your money. For I fear you are not prepared to die."

"No," said John; "I am not prepared. I have no hope either in this world or in the next. It is *all gone*."

He bowed his head upon his clasped hands, and one great sob seemed to come from his very heart. Arthur's own eyes filled with tears. It deeply moved him to see his strong, upright brother so shaken.

"John," he said, "listen to me. It is unworthy

of you to give way thus at the first touch of misfortune. All is not lost. I have a comfortable salary, and do not really need all the money which our father left me. I will share my portion with you. Pay your debts, take a fresh start, and you will do well yet. You are by no means an old man. It is not too late to build up for yourself another fortune."

John looked up, and a ray of hope seemed to dawn upon him.

"Arthur," he said, "are you in earnest? Do you really mean to give me half of your fortune? But no; it cannot be. I will not take advantage of your generosity. I will not let you so wrong yourself and your children. No; you are very good, but it cannot be."

"You will hurt me sorely if you do not accept my offer," said Arthur. "We are brothers, and it is in every way fitting that we should stand by each other in trouble. As to my children, they will be well enough provided for with what is left. I do not desire for them riches."

"Riches are pretty well in their way, however," said John.

"But money is not the *main* thing," said his brother, smiling. "I am happy to know that our

best portion lies beyond the reach of earthly panics or reverses."

"Say *my* best portion, not *ours*," replied John, sadly. "I am afraid I have no share in that inheritance."

"It is not too late to secure a share in it," said Arthur.

"I fear it is," was the reply. "I have lived for myself. I have departed from God. What right have I to expect to be numbered among his children? I have done a great deal of thinking since my trouble came, by day and by night. I see myself in a very different light now. Heretofore I have thought myself all right, but I find I have been all wrong."

"If God has shown your need of him, why not call upon him now?" said Arthur.

"Because I dare not," said John. "I have not cared for God, and now he has turned from me. He has visited me with his judgments. He has smitten me to the earth."

"Oh, I do not so read this providence," said Arthur, earnestly. "It is in mercy that he has visited you. He has shown you the emptiness of the things in which you trusted; he has given you a glimpse of your own heart. It is in love



that he is now calling after you to turn from the things which cannot satisfy you, to come home. Oh, John, is it not time? Have you not resisted his Spirit long enough?"

"Arthur," said John, "I will speak to you in all sincerity. I should be glad to be a Christian, but I do not know how. I do not think I have a spiritual mind. A great deal of talk that Christians seem to delight in I do not understand."

"No matter," said Arthur. "The question is not as to the turn of your mind, but, Are you willing to serve God with all the mind which he has given you?"

"Another of my difficulties is this," said John: "I do not like the way in which Christians live, as a general thing. I find they are as ready to take an undue advantage of me in business as other people."

"I do not think that amounts to anything," said Arthur. "The argument is simply this: Because some other men, who ought to serve God well, serve him but poorly, I, who ought to serve God, will not try to serve him at all."

"It seems a poor argument," said John. "But I have let it influence me too long. I fear that it is now too late for me to try to lead a new life.

My habits are fixed, my thoughts are worldly, my heart is hard."

"John," said his brother, "why will you not see the truth? All the promises which God has made to the seed of the righteous are rightfully yours; all the promises of blessings to the children of the covenant are yours; all the promises for lost sinners are yours. Then why do you not turn to God and live? Nothing keeps you from doing so but your own rebellious will."

"Perhaps you are right," said John, more humbly than he had ever before been known to speak. "I wish you would pray that I may be able to give up this will that stands between me and the eternal life."

"Let us offer that prayer together here and now," said Arthur, quickly, unwilling that this season of tenderness of heart should go by unimproved lest another such favorable opportunity might never come.

John assented; and Arthur prayed most earnestly for the soul that so long had wandered that it might now be guided and kept in the right way.

When the prayer was ended, John said,

"Arthur, I do not profess to know much about

creeds and doctrines, but this is my fixed resolve : After this, no matter what awaits me, 'as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.' "

Then Arthur's face lighted up with a great joy.

"I thank my God!" he cried. "Our mother's prayers are answered. Would that she could have lived to see this day!"

John dashed his hand suddenly across his eyes.

"Dear mother!" he said. "It was not her fault that we were not all good from the very start."

"She had great faith," said Arthur. "She held on to the promises through all discouragements. 'They are all children of the covenant,' she said; 'they will all be saved. We shall be a complete family in heaven.' And her words have proved true. The last one has been brought into the safe fold."

Just at this moment the door opened, and a pretty little girl ran into the room.

"Papa," she said, "me wants to come to you and sit upon your knee."

Her father took her in his arms, and she laid her head upon his breast.

"I hope she, too, will be a child of the covenant," said Arthur, smiling, "and that God may

from us raise up a seed to serve him from generation to generation."

"How much you think about that!" said John. "You seem always to have it in your mind that we are children of the covenant."

"It has ever been a delightful thought to me," said Arthur, "since our mother talked to me about it when I was quite a little boy. And now that I have had a larger experience of its blessings, I value this covenant relation so highly that nothing would induce me to renounce it for myself or for my children. May God grant to all of our children, and our children's children to the latest generation, these glorious blessings of his covenant!"









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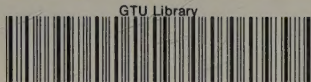
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